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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-96-045 *6 March 1996*

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Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Denounces Israeli Closure Decision

JN0503133496 Gaza Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation Television Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 5 Mar 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat today denounced Israel's decision to bar Palestinians from moving between the National Authority areas in the West Bank. 'Arafat said this decision violates the concluded agreements.

President Yasir 'Arafat said that Israel's decision completely violates the agreements on freedom of movement. He added: If these measures are necessary, then they should be discussed and agreement should be reached on them.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Says Attacks Target Palestinians, Israelis Alike

JN0503145596 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In a speech addressed over the telephone to thousands of citizens who participated in a packed popular rally organized by the Fatah Movement in Nativity Square in Bethlehem, President Yasir 'Arafat emphasized that the Palestinian people are with peace, and that we will continue the march and not become desperate in the face of this clique which works against the interests of our people.

President 'Arafat said what happened in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem is not only directed against the Israelis but against the sons of our people. He emphasized that these operations will not affect the peace process.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Endorses Life Sentence on al-Qassam's Abu-Wardah

JN0603105796 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1000 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat endorsed the sentence of life imprisonment with hard labor passed by the Higher State Security Court in Jericho on defendant Muhammad 'Atiyah Mahmud Abu-Wardah after he was found guilty of the charges of carrying out terrorist operations and harming the Palestinian people's interests in violation of the provisions of articles 174 and 175, paragraphs B and D of the Palestinian Penal code.

In another context, President 'Arafat said in a press statement today that there is a need to pursue the implementation of the decisions of the National Security Council. President 'Arafat also stressed the importance of taking decisive measures against the outlawed groups.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Said Seeking End of Jordan Fund Transfers to Hamas

TA0503191996 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1730 GMT 5 Mar 96

[Report by Arab affairs correspondent Ehud Ya'ari]

[FBIS Translated Text] 'Arafat has taken new steps against terror. Emulating the Egyptian and Jordanian style, he has seized mosques controlled by Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and placed them under Palestinian Authority control. Furthermore, a new tone can be heard in Palestinian radio broadcasts.

In addition, 'Arafat today held a meeting with [Israeli pro-peace activist] Abie Natan, which lasted over two hours. The meeting received enormous coverage in the Palestinian media. According to Abie, 'Arafat said: This morning we captured the Hamas member who is responsible for the distribution of funds arriving from Jordan to the Gaza Strip. 'Arafat added: We are now checking the accounts to find out who the recipients of the funds were.

Also in the meeting, 'Arafat appealed to Israel to request that King Husayn halt the transfer of funds from Jordan. By the way, this report has been naturally communicated to the prime minister's bureau. A reminder: Two Jordanian ministers visited Yasir 'Arafat this morning. The last detail of Abie's report: 'Arafat's proposed a summit with Peres and their respective senior defense advisers in Cairo very soon.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Urges Citizens To Expose Plotters

JN0503201296 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1900 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat has appealed to the Palestinian masses to defend the Palestinian dream of establishing an independent state and to expose the groups that are conspiring in darkness against the Palestinian dream.

Speaking to a Palestinian popular delegation at the Presidential Office today, he said that these operations are a plot against the Palestinian people, the Israeli people, the peace process, and the entire region.

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Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Military Wing Halts Operations Against Israelis

JN0503144096 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A statement by the military wing of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, today announced a halt to the operations against Israelis in response to the call made by the political leadership.

The statement, issued by the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Battalions, said that the military wing declares that it will not be responsible for any action that may be carried out against Israelis.

Palestinian Affairs: Al-Husayni: Anti-Hamas Struggle Requires Cooperation

TA0503161296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1415 GMT 5 Mar 96

[Report on recorded interview with Faysal al-Husayni by Yitzhaq Feller at the Orient House in Jerusalem on 5 March]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Feller] Al-Husayni very strongly denounced the operations of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad, at the same time implicitly criticizing Israel.

[Al-Husayni] I would like to state that last week I attended mourning rituals in three houses: a Jewish one, a Muslim, and a Christian. In this way, these crimes were perpetrated against all of us, not specifically the Jews or the Muslims. I think we should start operating differently. We should be partners [preceding word in English], and when we are, we will make every move together. We will do everything in cooperation.

I would like to add that our pain is no less than that felt by the Israelis, the Jews. It was a hard blow to all of us.

[Feller] How can we overcome Hamas, in your view?

[Al-Husayni] First of all, there should be cooperation. Our collaboration is only two years old, and yet we have already done many things. Regretfully, these crimes are the high price we are paying for our partnership. However, we should look to the future, not be afraid of peace, but fight for peace and against terror. We have been doing it, and we will do it more and more. Everyone, on both sides, should listen to the other side.

[Feller] Faysal al-Husayni objects to many government decisions made last night. Israel needs the Palestinian rule to be strong, he says, and it should therefore cooperate with us, give us more intelligence information about Hamas, which will allow us to act against them. If you keep information from us, do not be surprised if we are unable to act in harmony and cooperation, he said.

Replying to a Danish reporter's question, Faysal al-Husayni said: Israel is the one that nurtured Hamas, and it is now opening that Pandora's box. But this is not the time, and I will not elaborate on it, he added. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: Further on Hamas Leaflet Offering Temporary Cease-Fire

TA0503172096 Jerusalem JMCC PRESS SERVICE in English 1500 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The armed wing of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Units, issued its second leaflet in five days offering Israel a temporary cease fire. The first offer was made last Thursday [29 February], and gave Israel till 7pm this Friday to do the following:

1) Stop the organized Zionist terrorism against the Hamas movement and al-Qassam Units.

2) Stop all forms of transgression and aggression against Palestinian civilians in the occupied territories.

3) Release of Hamas prisoners in Israeli jails, led by the Mujahid Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, Shaykh Salah Shihadah, and 'Abd-al-' Aziz al-Rantisi.

Today's leaflet does not mention the Yahya 'Ayyash Units, which claim to be a part of the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Units and who have declared responsibility for the attacks of the past two Sundays. Today's leaflet says:

"We bless the jihad of our sons. But we must follow the latest developments taking place on the Palestinian scene and coordinate the policies and positions of the al-Qassam Units. This is to prevent confusion and to end the hostile media analyses about the al-Qassam Units. This is our official position:

"1) We fully respect and abide by the call of the movement's political leadership to stop all armed attacks against 'Israel.' We are not responsible any more for any action inside the Zionist entity.

"2) We call upon all acting military wings and armed units throughout the homeland which fall under the al-Qassam Units' banner to immediately stop all suicide attacks against Jews and to fully abide by the central decisions made by the al-Qassam Units' leadership.

"3) We allow all our active armed units in the areas falling under Zionist military rule in the West Bank — which is being subjected to collective punishments and being burned by Zionist oppression — to defend

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themselves and our cities, villages and people in light of the vicious Zionist attack.

"4) We will halt all armed attacks against Israel until the beginning of July as part of a limited, renewable cease-fire in order to provide a suitable environment of tranquility and stability in the region to reach a just cease fire between Hamas and the Israeli government. This period will prevent the continuation of mutual violence and plant the seeds of tranquility and stability in the region.

"5) We officially call upon the Palestinian Authority to prepare for these serious contacts and [word indistinct] the special mediation between Hamas and Israel to stop the tension and instability in the region and plan for cooperation and participation in building our beloved country. We stress the need to stop all measures begun by the Authority against the Islamic movement and the need to release all its followers.

"6) We will not hesitate to respond decisively against any terroristic measure carried out by 'Israel' against Hamas' followers and the al-Qassam Units. The limited cease-fire will be considered null and void if there is any terroristic activity carried out by "Israel" against our heroes and fighters. We will resume our suicide missions.

"To conclude: We hold the Israeli Government fully and absolutely responsible for everything that happened because of its obstinance and rejection of our proposals. We call upon it to use its mind and reason, and to take advantage of this real opportunity before the days of quiet and over and the moment of truth arrives."

Palestinian Affairs: Shaykh Hamami Calls For End to Bloodshed

TA0503172196 Ramallah AL-BILAD in Arabic 4 Mar 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Shaykh Jamil Hamami has called for "halting the campaign of violence and counterviolence" in the occupied Palestinian territories. He stressed that the Palestinian and Israeli peoples have no option other than dialogue and talking face to face with all credibility and objectivity to halt bloodshed between them. Hamami explained that the only solution for ending acts of violence is to look for peaceful and logical solutions. He added: "Some people might condemn the suicide operations and others might voice support for them." He pointed out that the Palestinian and Israeli peoples will be the losers unless a real way out of this crisis is found.

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas' al-Zahhar Urges Halt to Military Operations

JN0503172696 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 5 Mar 96

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat received Abi Nathan, Israeli peace advocate, at the Presidential Office in Gaza at noon today. Discussions dealt with the latest developments in the wake of the recent bombings and the Israeli measures, particularly the military siege.

Nathan watched a march staged by workers to protest against the siege. They called for lifting the siege from the Gaza Strip so that they will be able to go to work inside the green line. The workers condemned the latest attacks.

In his visit to Gaza, Nathan also met with Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar, a Hamas [Islamic Resistance] Movement in the Gaza Strip, at al-Zahhar's house this afternoon. Dr. al-Zahhar said he made clear his position to the Israeli street through his meeting with Nathan. He said that Hamas does not want to negotiate with Israel. He noted that if Hamas has any demands it will make them through the Palestinian Authority [PA].

On their call to the ['Izz-al-Din] al-Qassam Battalions [Hamas' military wing], al-Zahhar said:

[Begin al-Zahhar recording] In the name of God the merciful, the compassionate. Based on our realization of the political situation and in response to the demands of the Palestinian factions, the PA, and Fatah and the call of the conscience of Hamas Movement — a call for easing tension among the sons of the Palestinian people and working out a proper formula for coexistence and building this future — we decided to ask all the armed elements throughout Palestine to stop military operations and attacking Israeli targets — despite the fact that we do not know the persons or the organization of the Islamic Resistance Movements military wings or wing in the West Bank and Gaza. This request is also based on the holy saying [by Prophet Muhammad]: The Muslims are equal in blood, they should be united against others, and their security should be defended by all, regardless of their status. This is intended to ease tension among the Palestinians themselves. [end recording]

Al-Zahhar added that his movement is doing its utmost to establish good relations and work out a formula to take part in building the present stage.

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Palestinian Affairs: Al-Qassam Leader—Regrets Training Suicide Bombers

JN0603007296 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A member of the 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Battalions responsible for training those who carried out the suicide operations voiced repentance over causing the death of defenseless citizens and imposing military siege on the Palestinian territories.

In an interview with Voice of Palestine Muhammad Abu-Wardah, currently under arrest by the Palestinian security organs, said he is now convinced that these operations are inappropriate. He called on all the cells of the 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Battalions and the new disciples battalions to stop carrying out military operations which harm the Palestinian people.

Palestinian Affairs: Iran Said Controlling Hamas From Outside

TA0503180096 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic 4 Mar 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Arab diplomatic sources have affirmed that there is a sharp split in Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] that could paralyze the movement and remove it from the circle of action in the arena. These sources say that the movement is divided into three groups: The first is subordinate to the Iranian Revolutionary Guards and carries out their orders. This group serves the interests of certain regimes and is funded by them. The second group is searching for funds and has found its desire in Khartoum where the strings of radical Islamic forces are stretched. The leaders of this group meet with elements residing in Afghanistan and Khartoum. This group is now operating under the orders of mercenary extremist forces which perpetrate acts of violence in a number of Arab and Islamic states. As for the third group, it is composed of the movement's sons in the West Bank and Gaza Strip who have realized the need to deal with the new situation in the arena. This group is being subjected to immense pressure by the other two groups, but most of its members are rejecting the pressure and insisting on continuing the dialogue with the National Authority [NA] and participating in the process of construction and revival imposed by the peace process.

The sources said that Hamas in the Palestinian arena no longer adheres to its hardline mentality and that what activates some of its groups are the Iranian intelligence service and the leaders of Hizballah in Lebanon. There is an inside Hamas and an outside Hamas. This is liable to dissolve the movement and turn it into a political party in the Palestinian arena that lives among its followers, who constitute a small number in the Palestinian arena. The moderation of the Hamas wing inside has irritated Hamas' leaders abroad who have lost a base of support.

The informed sources said that the moderate Hamas leaders in the Palestinian arena have been threatened with elimination by the hardliners abroad, but they rejected these threats. They informed the NA about the threats and precautions were taken to safeguard their lives. Moreover, the NA promised to protect them.

These sources add that the position of the inside Hamas angered the outside leaders, who are supported by Tehran, radical movements in Afghanistan and Sudan, and figures who reside in Europe and supervise the funding of extremist movements that wreak havoc in various arenas, such as Algeria and Egypt. Recently, the outside leaders have resorted to carrying out acts of violence against Israeli targets as a means of attracting attention and in an attempt to promote a dialogue with the Israeli Government and present themselves as the party with which Israel can negotiate.

The informed sources believe that these operations aim to embarrass the NA and President Yasir 'Arafat and portray Hamas as being still unified and having an impact. The sources revealed that Hamas leaders abroad are setting up small cells as a military wing that will carry out the orders of these leaders, who have found themselves outside the circle of action. The have urged the escalation of acts of violence to cover up the beginning of their decline, the secrecy of their dependence, and their cooperation with certain intelligence services in the region.

The sources add that the leaders of this wing run their affairs through companies and plush offices in European and Arab capitals. They lead a life of opulence with their families. The sources say that the leaders of this wing are seeking to conduct a dialogue with Israel and appease it. Therefore, they are trying to impose this through secret contacts between Hamas and Israel. Some of the meetings have taken place through the mediation of the leaders of settlers.

The informed sources concluded that the hardline Hamas is living its last days and that the hardliners have turned into puppets in the hands of the Iranian Revolution Guards and the international terror gang that practices violence in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

The sources interpret the recent acts of violence as the last throes of death, meaning that the violence seeks to undermine the Palestinian people's future and the peace process and embarrass the NA and President Yasir 'Arafat in a bid to make the radical wing — supported by Iran — a party in the dialogue and a means for

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launching a dialogue with Tehran through those who have deviated from the Palestinian people's will and decision.

The sources disclosed a plan by Hamas hardliners living in European and Arab capitals. The plan is summarized in the following clauses:

1. Perpetrating terrorist operations in the Palestinian and Israeli arenas and flaring up the situation in this region.

2. Exploiting the Israeli response to these operations and the continuation of closure, siege, and starvation in a bid to turn back the clock.

3. Embarrassing the NA by forcing Israel to hold it responsible for the continuation of these acts of violence.

4. Opening the way to dialogue between Tel Aviv and other capitals through those hardliners.

5. Pushing the Palestinians toward infighting and turning the Palestinian arena into Algeria and a second Afghanistan.

6. Undermining the Palestinian people's economic aspirations and preventing the donor countries and investors from working in the Palestinian arena.

7. Undermining the future of the Palestinian people and starving them.

8. Giving an opportunity to the forces of extremism in Israel to implement their schemes against the Palestinian people and supporting the right-wing, particularly as the election campaign is approaching.

The sources said that the policies of this Hamas group are drawn up and reviewed in Afghanistan, Khartoum, and the offices of Hizballah. The highlight of the new policy aims at turning the Palestinian arena into Algeria and a second Afghanistan. A report drawn up by more than one Arab quarter affirms that the Palestinian arena differs from other arenas in characteristics and tendencies. This arena rejects terrorist schemes and attempts to split the people. The Palestinians have spoken about their future. They support the peace process and their president, Yasir 'Arafat. Consequently, the extremists will not be able to implement their goals. Hence, the NA will be able to foil all these plots. This authority, which is supported by its people, will not allow anyone to turn back the clock.

The sources added that secret meetings have been held between the movement's leaders abroad and officers of the Iranian Revolution Guards, the Iranian intelligence service, and Hizballah elements. Other meetings were held with hardline leaders who operate from various arenas in Khartoum and Afghanistan. The sources say that in these meetings Tehran ordered Hamas to begin implementing a terrorist scheme to undermine the aspirations of the Palestinian people and their leadership and open the way between Tehran and Tel Aviv.

On the other hand, the sources revealed that meetings have been held between hardline Hamas leaders and radical Jewish elements in European capitals and the United States under the auspices of some intelligence services.

Palestinian Affairs: Al-Husayni, Council Members Condemn Explosions

JN0503160196 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Faysal al-Husayni, official in charge of the Jerusalem file, and members of the Legislative Council in the holy city condemned the Tel Aviv operation and all recent explosions.

In a statement, these political figures emphasized the ugliness of these incidents, and that the catastrophes they inflict on the sons of our people and the peace process are in line with the Israeli extremists's call to stop the peace process.

Al-Husayni and the Legislative Council members in Jerusalem called on all sons of our people and their various establishments to stand firmly against such actions.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat's Adviser Agrees To Mediate Between Hamas, Israel

BR0503144096 Paris LE MONDE in French 5 Mar 96 p 5

[Interview with Nabil Sha'th, PA planning and international cooperation minister, by Patrice Claude in Jerusalem; date not given: "These Bomb Attacks Could Only Have Been Carried Out With the Cooperation of Israeli Extremists"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Claude] Why did you wait until Sunday [3 March] to announce a ban on armed groups?

[Sha'th] We announced a political decision. In reality our national security forces and our police force have been repressing these organizations since we have been here. Recently we seized an entire arms cache in Gaza. We are resolutely continuing to confiscate weapons. We have arrested several hundred militants, but these armed groups are very secret. They have no office and indulge in no public activity.

The last three bomb attacks against the Israelis were committed by the 'Izz-al-Din Qassam cells from Hebron, a region which is not under our jurisdiction. These

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people are renegades, cut off from both their political leaders and the "military" leadership of their movement. The political leaders within Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad are telling us — and I believe it is true — that they have no authority over these armed groups. Indeed, over the last few months we have established that the orders given to the armed branches of the two Islamist movements always come from abroad.

[Claude] From where?

[Sha'th] From Jordan and Syria. Jordan is home to the historical leadership of Hamas. And Syria and Lebanon is home to the most hard-core military wing. The Iranian connection — Tehran exerts a very great influence over these people — passes through Amman via a certain 'Imad al-Halami. I am not accusing Jordan, but why are we being accused by Israel of not getting to grips with the infrastructure of Hamas? If some people in Jordan have the right to operate and issue orders, why should we always be depicted as the scapegoats?

[Claude] Why did the truce agreed to seven months ago end last week?

[Sha'th] Because of the international factors I have just mentioned and because of the assassination of Yahya 'Ayyash — alias the "Engineer" — on 5 January in Gaza. That act gave the international hard wing of the movement a pretext to resume its operations. His assassination (probably by the Israeli Shin Bet — LE MONDE editor's note) virtually traumatized Palestinian public opinion. We had guaranteed the safety of these people and were given Israel's complete assurance that as long as the truce in bomb attacks continued, its security services would not touch a hair on their heads. Yes, the assassination, and vengeance was the pretext used for resuming the bomb attacks. Then again, that is no explanation of the second attack and dreadful carnage this Sunday.

[Claude] Does the three-month cease-fire announced by the people responsible for the bomb attack have a chance of holding?

[Sha'th] I do not know. It is totally beyond our jurisdiction. Everything depends on Shim'on Peres. I understand his position. He is under tremendous pressure. I understand Israeli feelings, their anger and anguish. But Mr. Peres appears to have shifted from a mode of cooperation with us to a mode of confrontation.

[Claude] Are you prepared to serve as a mediator between Hamas and Israel, as the people responsible for the attack claim?

[Sha'th] Yes, of course. We have already done so. That was how, with a green light from Yitzhaq Rabin, we succeeded in obtaining a seven-month cease-fire. There were secret contacts between Israel and Hamas, and the two parties asked for — and obtained — our agreement to establish these contacts.

[Claude] Will it be possible to negotiate a new cease-fire?

[Sha'th] To be quite honest, today I do not know who to talk to. Who is the legitimate dialogue partner in Hamas? With whom and how should negotiations be resumed? What is the role played by the Israeli far right in this whole affair? Personally, like Yasir 'Arafat, I am convinced that these attacks could only have been perpetrated with the cooperation of the Israeli far right. Ask yourself this question: Who stands to gain from the crime in question?

[Claude] What is your opinion?

[Sha'th] People on the Israeli and on our own extreme right who, together, want to destroy the peace process. It is obvious that Likud will benefit politically from these murders. Who, apart from the massacred innocent bystanders, are the victims of these attacks? The Palestinian Authority [PA], our people, Shim'on Peres and his Labor Party. Come on, open your eyes, it is clear to see.

Palestinian Affairs: Police Chief Warns Citizens Not To Shelter Wanted Persons

JN0603092796 Gaza Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation Television Network in Arabic 2105 GMT 5 Mar 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dear viewers, we present to you this announcement and warning: No citizen shall be allowed to shelter or hide any person wanted by the Palestinian National Authority [PNA]. Citizens should inform the nearest police station about the hideout of any person wanted by the PNA. All citizens are called upon to inform the police about the location of any weapons, explosives, or ammunition.

Anyone who is proven to know the hideout of a person wanted by the PNA, hides him, or helps him hide; or knows where weapons, explosives, and ammunition are hidden, shall be subject to legal action and shall be punishable by law. Punishment may include imprisonment, a fine, or both.

This announcement was issued by Police Director General Brigadier General Ghazi al-Jabali.

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Palestinian Affairs: PA Reportedly 'Seizing Control' of Hamas Mosques

NC0503163996 Paris AFP in English 1632 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Gaza City, Gaza Strip, March 5 (AFP) — Yasir 'Arafat's Palestinian Authority [PA] on Tuesday [5 March] struck a blow at Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] seizing control of its mosques after a wave of bomb attacks on Israel, Palestinian officials said.

"From now on across the Palestinian territories, the mosques will be dedicated to God and no one else," the Palestinian attorney general, Khalid al-Qidrah, told AFP.

Palestinian police have since Monday been searching mosques controlled by the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) and made hundreds of arrests since the February 25 start of a wave of attacks which has cost 60 lives.

"It is a security measure that we are taking after the recent attacks" linked to Hamas militants, a senior Palestinian security official said. "We have decided to put all mosques under the control of the Waqf," the Palestinian ministry in charge of religious properties, he added.

The Palestinian Authority has already begun to name imams to the mosques, civil servants from the Waqf ministry who from now on will be in charge of giving sermons in place of Hamas imams. The Palestine Mosque, the largest in Gaza, has already passed to the control of Waqf as well as the mosque in the militant stronghold of Shaykh Radwan.

In the Gaza Strip, some 200 mosques had been run until now by Hamas or other militants groups such as the Islamic Jihad, while the Waqf was only in charge of about 70. "Mosques should not belong to one organisation, only to the Islamic Waqf which is part of the Palestinian National Authority," al-Qidrah said. "Mosques must be devoted to prayer. Nobody will be allowed to use them any longer for political ends."

Palestinian Affairs: Radio Reports Israeli Army Adopts Stringent Measures

JN0603075496 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The command of the Israeli forces of occupation has ordered its soldiers to act in a harsh and severe manner, and to arrest all those who are found on the roads outside the boundaries of cities and villages.

The Israeli occupation army's decision also tightens the military siege on all the cities and villages and bars the inhabitants from leaving them in cars or on foot.

The Israeli army's decision which was distributed to the citizens in the Palestinian territories threatened to use force and harsh measures against all those who are found on the roads outside the cities and villages.

Palestinian Affairs: More on Raid of Islamic University, Detentions

TA0603082196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Last night, Palestinian police raided the Islamic University in Gaza, searched for weapons and seditious material, and detained three of the guards. Special Palestinian Police units surrounded the university and conducted searches for six hours.

Early this morning, the Palestinian security services detained dozens of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists in Nabulus, the Balatah refugee camp, and Kafr Qallil. This is reported by our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem.

Palestinian Affairs: Police Raid Islamic University, Detain Suspects

TA0603075696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0700 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Palestinian police raided the Islamic University in Gaza yesterday. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that Palestinian police continued to make arrests in the Gaza Strip last night. Dozens of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists were detained. The number of detainees so far totals over 400.

Palestinian Affairs: PNC Official Says Bombings Dictate Israel's Withdrawal

NC0603070296 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2310 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 5 Mar (MENA)— Muhammad Subayh, secretary of the Palestine National Council [PNC] and the Palestine representative to the Arab League, has stated that the recent acts of violence carried out by Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] require the Israeli authorities to speed up the peace process in its capacity as the sole guarantee for maintaining security in the region.

In statements to AL-AHRAM to be published tomorrow, Subayh noted that all the acts of violence are being carried out in territory that is not under the control of the Palestinian Authority [PA]. This, Subayh added,

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requires Israel to expedite its withdrawal from the rest of the territories after it has been proven that the Palestinian side can maintain security and control the territories that are handed over to it.

On the PA talks with Hamas, the PNC official said the PA prevented Hamas from carrying out acts of violence between April [1995] and the day Yahya 'Ayyash was assassinated. He blamed Israeli excesses for harming the peace process.

Subayh warned the Palestinian opposition factions against embarking on any action that is bound to harm the sovereignty of the territory under Palestinian control. Any such actions will have extremely grave consequences.

The PNC secretary urged all the Israeli peace advocates to support Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres now that numerous right-wing officials like Sharon, Barak, and Netanyahu are supporting him.

PNC Secretary Muhammad Subayh urged the United States to intercede to salvage the peace process following the PA's implementation of all its obligations. He warned of the closure of the Palestinian towns and of mass punishments, which are bound to harm the peace process and the Palestinian economy.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Urayqat on Israeli Measures, Peace Crisis

NC0503205696 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1840 GMT 5 Mar 96

[Telephone interview with Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, Palestinian Legislative Council member, in Jericho, by Shadiyah Riyad in Cairo; date not given; from "The Talking Newsreel" program — live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Riyad] Dr. 'Urayqat, the Palestinian self-rule areas were the scene yesterday of massive demonstrations that denounced the suicide operations of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. As President Yasir 'Arafat said yesterday, this stand shows that those who carry out these actions are a small minority. How do we prevent this minority from controlling the fate of the entire Palestinian people and imposing a policy that it does not accept?

['Urayqat] It is true that the Palestinian people repeatedly voiced, since the Madrid conference, their genuine desire for the peace process. The Arab-Israeli conflict was caused in the first place when the Palestinian people were deprived of peace. We now want to talk unemotionally and without fears. Very regrettably, these operations have derailed the peace process. We notice that there is on the Israeli side an exploitation of what is happening. There is an attempt to hold the Palestinian National Authority [PNA] responsible and to blame us for what is happening. There is on the Israeli side an unsound voice insinuating that the peace process was the cause for these operations. To say so is a big strategic mistake. In response, Israel is trying to turn back the clock. They occupied our territories for almost 29 years and are still occupying some of them. They have returned to the policies of closure, demolition of houses, arrests, curfews, and threats. All these measures are not realistic. We need to protect the peace process because the only option before the peoples of the region is to adhere to the peace process. I now call for a quick entry into the final stage negotiations. We want separation, but not the concept of separation that is signified by Israeli strangulation, the separation of territories in the West Bank, the separation between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and keeping the crossing points on the Egyptian and Jordanian fronts tightly closed by Israel. This means economic and political strangulation of Palestinian life. We must now loudly say that the peace process is in real danger. The peace process sponsor, the United States, and the leaders of the region should call for a summit to be attended by President Clinton, President Mubarak, King Husayn, President 'Arafat, the Israeli prime minister, the Europeans, and other officials. The peace process must be saved by holding such a meeting at the soonest possible date. The natural response to these waves of violence and counter violence [changes thought]. We do not forget what happened in the al-Ibrahimi Mosque massacre and the assassination of the Israeli prime minister at the hands of Israeli extremists. These actions by extremists on both sides have put the peace process in real crisis. The responsibility now is to maintain the peace process because it is the only option for the peoples of the region, so as to end the vicious circle of violence and counter violence, chaos, and bloodshed. This is what is needed now. More than ever before, the present situation now needs a meeting at the highest levels to be attended by the sponsor and the concerned parties so as to study the situation and enter into the final stage negotiations as soon as possible. The Israeli government turned the clock back when it adopted collective punishment, closed the areas, demolished houses, arrested people, and disregarded the agreement. The Taba agreement is now vulnerable and it is not being implemented. Israel almost canceled it when it announced that it has the right to enter the PNA areas, when it announced that it is returning Gaza's students from the West Bank universities, and when it announced the closure of all PNA areas. This government has shot itself in the foot. This is wrong. What is needed now is intensification of seasoned, realistic, and responsible efforts to get out of this predicament and give new mo-

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mentum to the peace process. There is no other option than that of continuing with the peace process.

[Riyad] The peace process might indeed be at stake, as you pointed out. What we need now are concerted efforts to rescue the region from this serious situation. But President 'Arafat warned in his speech of a foreign scheme being hatched by the enemies of the Palestinian people. How can foreign enemies be confronted?

['Urayqat] As I said, President 'Arafat and all the members of the PNA are constantly holding emergency meetings. We, as Palestinians, cannot be held responsible for everything that occurs in this region. As we have just said, the Israeli government or community sees that the responsibility falls on the Palestinian Authority and the elected president Yasir 'Arafat. But we cannot stand guard to watch whatever they do and their [word indistinct]. What is needed now is international and regional efforts at the highest levels to save the peace process. We need to protect the peace process, because attempts to turn the arms of the clock back.... [changes thought] the peace ship has set sail and is now in the middle of the river. If it is abandoned now, winds will blow on it from all directions. This will be a mistake. The peace process must be saved, not by Palestinian-Israeli efforts alone, but with the concerted efforts of Egypt, Jordan, Syria, the United States, Russia, and the European Union. All these countries must call a summit meeting to consider ways to begin the final phase of negotiations and step up the peace process. This is the normal, realistic, and logical response to what is happening.

[Riyad] Such an action must be very swift because time is crucial.

['Urayqat] I am not calling for such a meeting in a few months, but in the next few hours or days at the most.

[Riyad] Concerning the recent operation in Tel Aviv, do you not support the view that these actions could not have been done without cooperation on the part of extremist Israelis.

['Urayqat] As we said, the extremist Israelis have declared their position more than once. They want to ruin the peace process. They killed the Israeli prime minister, they shed Palestinian blood in the Hebron massacre, and the Israeli settlers are terrorizing the people in the West Bank and Gaza on a daily basis; they kill the people and spread corruption on earth. We do not absolve the Israeli extremist powers. These are very clear things. When it comes to the operation in Tel Aviv, there is a very tight closure imposed on all the areas under PNA control and on all the Palestinians. However, the suicide operation was carried out. The operation that was carried out in Jerusalem occurred at a time when there was a tight closure on all the PNA-controlled areas and on all the Palestinians. The problem will not be solved by trying to turn the clock back or by the Peres government following the extreme rightists or others. The issue needs wise and realistic treatment. What we need is to protect the peace process and give it a strong impetus to answer all those who are trying to ruin it.

[Riyadh] Thank you, Mr. 'Urayqat.

Palestinian Affairs: New Group Says It Will Pursue Operations Against Israel

JN0603095396 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0900 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian Islamic Revolutionary Army said it will pursue its operations against Israel in spite of the call by the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] to suspend operations until July.

The Palestinian Islamic Revolutionary Army is an unknown organization which along with Hizballah claimed responsibility for the attack which recently killed four Israeli soldiers in the occupied area in southern Lebanon.

Palestinian Affairs: TV Commentary Rejects Responsibility for Bombings

JN0503215396 Gaza Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation Television Network in Arabic 1930 GMT 5 Mar 96

[Station commentary by Hasan al-Kashif: "Direct Your Questions Far Away From Us"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the search for those who benefited from the Dizengoff and Jerusalem operations, the Israelis should change the direction of their questions. President 'Arafat and the Palestinian National Authority [PNA] are not required to answer the Israeli questions, because they do not benefit from these operations politically, because they are not in charge of the security of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, and because Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] has always been outside the Palestinian establishment, outside the PLO and all its institutions.

Yasir 'Arafat is trying to spread stability in the Palestinian Authority areas so that he will be able to move from the interim period to the final phase — the phase of the independent Palestinian state — in which the Palestinians will be free from all restrictions of the interim period with all its daily problems and confusions. Reaching the final phase requires political and security stability which will deprive the Israeli side of all pretexts to evade the known commitments.

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Yasir 'Arafat inherited what was left by the Israeli policy in the occupied Palestinian territory. He inherited it with all the weapons poured into the West Bank and Gaza Strip on the eve of the Israeli withdrawal. He inherited the consequences of the Israeli political stupidity when the PLO factions were described as terrorist factions and other factions were not banned and were working publicly to lay the ground for what the Israeli Government now terms as infrastructure institutions.

The course of internal Palestinian dealing — which has produced the beginning of political stability, defused all bombs, and prevented infighting — is evidence of the soundness and wisdom of this course. Soundness and wisdom are natural results of the lessons of the long and complicated internal Palestinian experience. However, the absence of the historic wisdom, soundness, and outlook of the other side is now producing a bitter harvest there. This is not a Palestinian responsibility in terms of preludes and results.

The Israeli questions must be addressed to the Israelis themselves, not to us. The political and security answers there must be very courageous, far away from self-acquittal. The increasing number of killed Israelis coincides with the increasing popularity of Netanyahu in Israel. This is despite the fact that this also coincides with the collapse of Hamas' popularity in the PNA areas.

Yasir 'Arafat is not required to send his men with the Mosad elements to where there are very well-known regional parties who have every interest in the recent and past bombings. Our people are not required to pay the price of the past political stupidity and present Israeli security incompetence from their stability, bread, and future. We will not serve as an excuse for others who evade their old and new responsibilities.

Official and popular interests lie in a stability that will help the Palestinians cross the interim phase. Those who do not support the Palestinian interest have interest in continuous bombings so that they will stop everything and create strangling crises that pave the way for permanent and transient alternatives to cancel Palestine — people and homeland — from geography, memory, and history. This will never happen, because it did not happen under the circumstances of the diaspora and long-term occupation, so how will it happen today?

The Dizengoff bombing, after the Jerusalem bombings, points at the Israeli and regional parties which benefit politically from this. The Government of Israel will not benefit from evading these big facts and searching for one or more wanted persons. This is because the pursuit and assassination of one person will make those who carry it out false and temporary heroes.

I do not believe that one single Israeli remained happy and secure after the assassination of Yahya 'Ayyash.

O Israeli officials, search your own home and outside the border. Do not address your questions to us because we do not have the answers.

Palestinian Affairs: PFLP-GC Statement Praises 'Heroic' Operations

JN0503191096 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1730 GMT 5 Mar 96

["Text" of statement issued by the PFLP-GC Central Committee on 5 March — read by announcer]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

The Session of martyr Dr. Fathi al-Shaqaqi:

The Central Committee of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC] held a series of meetings in the session of martyr leader Fathi al-Shaqaqi on 2, 3, and 4 March 1996. The Central Committee discussed the latest political developments in the Palestinian arena, as well as the organizational situation, proceeding from its commitment to the national constants and the continuation of the revolutionary course, which rejects the capitulatory Oslo accords, their annexes, and consequences. It also proceeded from its commitment to armed struggle and to all other forms of struggle against the Zionist enemy until liberation and the establishment of the independent state.

At the end of its meetings, the PFLP-GC Central Committee reiterated the following:

1. The Oslo accords, their results, annexes, and promises constitute the gravest forms of relinquishment of the Palestinian people's right to their national soil, self-determination, liberation from occupation, and establishment of a Palestinian state. These accords do not even express the Palestinians' minimum rights. In fact, 'Arafat's deluded authority, which is a more brutal form of the Zionist occupation authority imposed on our people inside, will never succeed in subjugating our people in the service of occupation and Zionism despite all attempts to mislead and deceive our people through the so-called legislative council elections and through its attempts to convene the Palestine National Council [PNC] to subjugate it in the service of the Oslo accords and their objectives.

While underscoring this stand, the PFLP-GC announces its condemnation of any participation in the PNC

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meeting, expected to convene inside occupied Palestine under the bayonets of the Zionist occupation authority and the 'Arafat authority which seeks to kill the spirit of the Palestinian National Charter and announce its death. The PFLP-GC urges all Palestinian forces and factions to maintain unity in confronting the Oslo accords and to reject dealing with the 'Arafat authority.

2. The Palestinian Arab people, backed by their Arab and Muslim nations and the world liberation forces, will not be deterred by the Oslo capitulationist agreements from continuing their pursuit of liberation and self-determination and their work to protect their unity and defend their national inalienable rights in Palestine.

Our confidence in our people and in this nation, which is thousands of years old, and our belief in the inevitability of its awakening — with its national, pan-Arab, and Islamic forces — to abort the objectives of Zionism and imperialism will not be shaken by all the attempts that seek to subjugate this nation and control its wealth and resources.

3. The national, pan-Arab, and Islamic awakening, represented by the liberation forces, prompts us to underline, once again, the importance of establishing a single front comprising all these forces to ensure the continuity of the struggle, with all its forms — political, cultural, and military. In this regard, the PFLP-GC Central Committee hails the role played by the national and Islamic resistance in southern Lebanon, particularly Hizballah and its mujahidin.

The appeasement of the world, led by the United States, of the Zionist entity, the so-called new world order, and its influence on some events and issues will not shake our belief in the justness of the Palestine cause and the right of its people to liberation and self-determination. These things will not be an eternal fate in the world arena. The signs of deterioration in the relations among the big powers and the signs of economic and political competition to control the sources of wealth must prompt our nation to take the initiative and break free from those who are controlling its wealth and the resources of the people.

4. While paying tribute and homage to the martyrs of the heroic operations in Jerusalem, Ashkelon, and Dizengoff and all the martyrdom-seeking operations that deprived the Zionist enemy forces of sleep, the PFLP-GC Central Committee underlines that such operations represent the best proof of the Palestinian people's refusal to tolerate 'Arafat's authority and the Zionist occupation. They also prove that our struggle with the Zionist enemy will remain a basic and strategic base for pan-Arab awakening and for protecting our national cause and the Arab nation's national security and future.

5. The Central Committee urges the national and pan-Arab forces to confront the regional and international conspiratorial attempts against the Syrian pan-Arab position, which rejects extortion and submission. It also values highly Iran's support and backing to the Palestinian people and their national and Islamic revolutionary forces and their inalienable rights in Palestine. The Central Committee further urges support for the Libyan position in the face of the U.S. pressures and siege. It also calls for lifting the economic embargo imposed on our people in Iraq.

Glory and immortality to the martyrs of our Arab and Islamic nations.

Long live the struggle of the Palestinian Arab people against 'Arafat's authority and the Zionist occupation.

It is a revolution until the liberation of land and man.

[Signed] The PFLP-GC Central Committee.

Palestinian Affairs: PFLP Official Rules Out Retaliatory Israeli Raids on Lebanon

NC0503182396 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1555 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Beirut, 5 Mar (MENA)—Salah Salah, member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine's [PFLP] Political Bureau, has ruled out raids by Israeli warplanes on south Lebanon in retaliation for the Jerusalem, Ashqelon, and Tel Aviv operations.

But the Palestinian official said he expects the Israeli reaction to involve more arrests of members of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad inside Israel in addition to the pursuit of these elements and symbols abroad.

In a statement to a MENA correspondent in Lebanon, Salah warned that these Israeli measures will delay the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations on the final stage of self-rule and will also delay the Palestine National Council meeting to discuss amending the charter. He expressed his belief that the Israeli military and security measures being taken now against the Palestinian self-rule areas confirm that Israel remains an occupying power that can close and divide these areas whenever it likes.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Receives Jordanian Envoy, Prince Hasan Message

JN0603120996 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1000 GMT 6 Mar 96

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat emphasized the strength of Palestinian-

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Jordanian relations, describing them as relations between twins.

President 'Arafat said this when he received Jordan's Representative Ziyad al-Majali at the presidency in Gaza today. President 'Arafat asked al-Majali to convey his greetings to Jordan's King Husayn and his thanks for the stand of support for the National Authority [NA].

Al-Majali delivered a written message to President 'Arafat from Jordanian Crown Prince Hasan. Crown Prince Hasan affirmed that Jordan fully supports the PLO as the Palestinian people's sole and legitimate representative. Prince Hasan also said that Jordan supports the NA in its serious endeavors to establish the independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. He also praised Jordanian-Palestinian relations.

Palestinian Affairs: Hebron Mayor Says No Reason To Delay Redeployment

JN0603114996 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0520 GMT 6 Mar 96

[Telephone interview with Hebron Mayor Mustafa al-Natshah in Hebron, by Yusuf al-Qazzaz in the Jericho studio; from the "New Day" feature—live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [al-Qazzaz] Mr. al-Natshah, good morning.

[Al-Natshah] Good morning to you.

[Al-Qazzaz] The meeting that was held yesterday in view of the current circumstances most probably dealt with many Palestinian concerns and not only the concerns of the city of Hebron?

[Al-Natshah] National and Islamic figures in Hebron, representatives of institutions and political groups, and members of the Legislative Council met in Hebron yesterday to discuss the situation. We studied the situation, particularly in the Hebron area, and the situation in general.

The conferees affirmed that the Palestinian National Authority [PNA] headed by brother leader Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] has scored achievements for the Palestinian people on the ground and has started to fulfill their national aspirations. It seems that this does not please the Israelis and the Israeli authorities. They started to tighten the noose around the Palestinian people. All Palestinians are united behind their leader. The conferees sent three messages. The first, a letter of support to brother President Abu-'Ammar and the PNA. The second letter was sent to Shim'on Peres containing three major points: The first point is that peace is a strategic option for the Palestinian people, and we want it to be a just and comprehensive peace that gives everyone their rights. A just and comprehensive peace provides security to all the parties. The second point is that the Hebron Governorate denounces all acts of violence which kill defenseless people from all sides. This will make the region exist once again in a whirlpool of violence. We appeal to all to immediately stop these actions so that peace can be given a genuine chance. The third point is that the policy of collective punishment violates international principles and norms and divine laws and leads to results that destroy the peace process which we all are eager to render a success.

We appealed to him to stop all these measures that were recently taken and which we consider collective punishment. We also sent a cable to President Clinton asking him to support the peace process and condemned all the acts of violence and counter violence. We appealed to him to pressure Israel to stop the policy of collective punishment against our Palestinian people.

[Al-Qazzaz] Mr. al-Natshah, we condemn acts of violence perpetrated by corrupt people among us. What about the acts of violence carried out in the open by the other side, the armed side, particularly in Hebron?

[Al-Natshah] Violence and counter-violence is a policy that our people reject. We chose peace as a strategic option, and we scored great achievements on the ground, the latest being the elections which were held in a democratic manner as attested by all the observers, whether Arab or international observers. Even, the Israelis praised the democratic spirit the Palestinian people enjoy.

We do not want these operations to perturb the entire peace process and subject the Palestinian people to the policy of collective punishment.

[Al-Qazzaz] You are speaking about the peace process. It is obvious that the Israeli army's redeployment in Hebron will be postponed?

[Al-Natshah] There is no excuse for delaying the redeployment in the Hebron area. Similar operations had taken place in Israel. Their perpetrators were from other areas in the West Bank and this had not affected the redeployment operation. [passage omitted]

Arab-Israeli Affairs

Arab-Israeli Affairs: Gaza Editor—Extremists on Both Sides Cooperating

LD0503180096 Paris France-Info Radio in French 1630 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] For Hassan Balawi, editor-in-chief of LA LETTRE DE LA PALESTINE published

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in Gaza, the sealing-off of the autonomous areas announced by the Israeli Government will not have any effect on the terrorists. Hassan Balawi:

[Begin Balawi recording] The bomb attack confirms that the measures taken by the Israeli authorities do not lead anywhere since the [Gaza] strip was closed for more than a week and the attack took place in Tel Aviv. Even a bird could not leave Gaza. The Tel Aviv attack confirms that all the measures taken by the Israeli authorities do not lead anywhere. This goes to prove once again that Israeli extremist elements and Palestinian extremist elements cooperate. Indeed, both have a single objective: to sabotage the peace process. [end recording]

Arab-Israeli Affairs: Reports of Yemen-Israel Summit in Amman Denied

MM0503142196 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 5 Mar 96 pp 1, 4

[Report by 'Ali Ibrahim in London and Salih Qallab in Amman: "No Summit Before Comprehensive Peace, No Visits With Israeli Passports"]

[FBIS Translated Text] An official source in Sanaa has told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that Yemen is not speeding up normalization with Israel, and denied reports — following the recent visit to Sanaa of the two Israeli Knesset members (from the Arab Democratic Party) 'Abd-al-Wahhab Darawshah and Talab al-Sani' — of arrangements to hold a summit meeting between Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres.

In a telephone conversation the source stressed that these reports are baseless, and ruled out a Yemeni-Israeli summit prior to the normalization of relations between the two countries. The source stressed that Yemen considers a comprehensive and just peace and the recovery of the occupied Arab territories, in Palestine, the Syrian Golan, or south Lebanon, as a precondition for normalization.

The reports had indicated the possibility of this summit's being convened in the Jordanian capital, Amman, with the participation of the Jordanian monarch, King Husayn.

Sources in Amman have also told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that Yemeni officials told Darawshah and al-Sani', during their visit to Sanaa last week, about the possibility of granting Yemeni citizenship to Israeli Jews of Yemeni descent who wish to revert to their citizenship of origin. The sources added that Yemen also agreed to the visit of the three rabbis who represent the Yemeni Jewish community in Israel. Darawshah had brought with him a message from the most prominent religious leader representing this community, Shimu'il Jimla'il [as transliterated].

Informed sources in Sanaa have said that Yemen does not object to visits by Jews of Yemeni descent, pointing to an Arab League resolution aimed at encouraging Arab Jews to return to their country of origin. The sources said, however, that these people will not be able to visit Yemen as Israelis or with Israeli passports because there are no diplomatic relations between Israel and Yemen, but that they will be able to visit their relatives in Yemen using other passports.

It should be mentioned that Darawshah and al-Sani' visited Yemen last week with two temporary Yemeni passports given to them in Amman, prior to their arrival in Sanaa.

Meanwhile, Palestinian circles expect Yemen to open a mission to the Palestinian Authority in Gaza, on the lines of the other Arab missions. The Sanaa sources said, however, that a decision has not been taken to that effect.

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Algeria

Algeria: Government To Borrow From Employees To Pay Wage Arrears

LD0503234596 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2300 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] After the meetings of consultations between representatives from the government and the national secretariat of the General Union of Algerian Workers [UGTA] with regard to the docking of salaries of the public sector workers, the government has adopted a number of measures after informing the national secretariat of the UGTA. These measures were contained in a joint communique of the government and the UGTA and consist in the following:

First: The docking of salaries of the public sector workers will be replaced by borrowing as bonds will be deposited in the treasury which will be refunded with interest.

Second, the minimum salary that will be affected by this measure has been increased from 6,000 to 10,000 dinars.

Third: The implementation of this measure will be carried out until 30 June 1996.

The docking of salaries within the framework of borrowing will be implemented from [1] April 1996 to 30 June 1996, i.e. for three months.

Algeria: Government, UGTA Agree To Resume Dialogue

LD0503203196 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The government and the trade union have agreed to return soon to dialogue on the social situation as a whole. The conclusions that can be drawn from this agreement between the government and UGTA [General Union of Algerian Workers] are that dialogue and consultations have borne fruit and that they have materialized in a civilized manner between two parties which have given the country's highest interest top priority. [passage omitted]

The government's communique has said that the two sides, the government and the trade unions, agreed to continue this dialogue in the next few days on the social situation of the country.

Since its appointment the government has consulted with the various social partners such as the trade unions, farmers' union, public and private entrepreneurs. This way it makes everyone take part in discussing and giving their opinions on the most important social and economic issues that affect the country.

Algeria: World Bank Vice President 'Optimistic' About Economy

LD0503140596 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1130 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] World Bank Vice President Kamal Darwish left our country this morning. After meeting with Algerian officials Darwish said in an interview with [correspondent] Hamed Kawou that he is optimistic about the economic reforms carried out so far:

[Begin Darwish recording] I was impressed above all by the progress made over the last two years. I believe that inflation has been brought under control. I think that there is a lot more flexibility in the economy: companies, whether public or private, have access to currencies, to nontransferable [intrans] funds, and I think that the basic economy has stabilized. On this base we have to construct an accelerated growth which would allow Algerians to be more prosperous, to find jobs, and in the coming years this is going to be the biggest challenge that we want to tackle with you. [end recording]

The World Bank vice president also met with Prime Minister [Ahmed] Ouyahia and in particular they discussed the new government's program.

[Begin Darwish recording] The prime minister explained to me that macroeconomic stabilization is in hand, so now the top priorities are employment, growth, sound investment, to ensure that Algeria does not return to the sort of crises it had in the past. The government's program is not totally complete; I believe that aspects of the program could be fine-tuned in the coming weeks, and so we hope to be able to support, with the resources of the World Bank, a program of accelerated growth and to work together on projects and programs. [end recording]

Darwish also met with the ministers for industry, energy, agriculture, and finance.

Algeria: Prime Minister Addresses Expatriates' Council

LD0403120696 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1931 GMT 3 Mar 96

["Full" speech by Algerian Prime Minister Ahmed Ouyahia at the concluding session of the Algerian Expatriates Transitional Council of Coordination and Follow Up; place and date not given — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

Ladies and gentlemen: It is my pleasure to address you on the occasion of the first session of the Algerian

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Expatriates Transitional Council of Coordination and Follow up. [passage omitted]

It is also a pleasure to see your meetings being held at a time when the Algerian people has begun implementing the aims of its choice which was expressed democratically and freely at the 16 November poll. This choice was embodied in the slogan, Let us build Algeria together. [passage omitted]

Ladies and Gentlemen, as I try to remind you of the contribution which Algeria expects from its expatriates in order to complete its national recovery, I feel it is my duty also to inform you about the stage of this recovery. The recovery has reached a stage which makes one more optimistic than ever before for several reasons. I can summarize this in three main reasons:

Firstly, Algeria has in fact beaten the criminal attempts to shake its stability. Yes, our country has defeated these attempts which have far-reaching ramifications, thanks to its people's determination when it rose like one man against such conspiracies and thanks also to the determination of the state to establish security and guarantee it to all individuals and properties every where in the country.

Regardless of the outcome of the fight against criminal activities, such conspiracies are doomed, particularly following the country's responsible and firm decision to bring back concord between the ranks of its children through the introduction of amnesty and national solidarity which rejects the culture of hate.

True, the existence of a blind and a wanton terrorism may reflect the presence of lingering ambitions to shake the stability. But terrorism will be eliminated thanks to the resolute and unwavering actions of the Republic's security forces [applause] and thanks to the permanent vigilance and mobilization of our society.

Secondly, one should also be optimistic, given Algeria's determination to complete the democratic and pluralist process on firm and permanent bases.

The agenda of legislative and local elections has officially been drawn up; the state has shouldered the responsibility to see them through.

Within this framework, the president of the republic has repeatedly asked the political class to join in the national dialogue. However, such a dialogue is safe and fruitful only if it is held within the framework of the tenets which are known to everyone.

President Liamine Zeroual reiterated in his speech to the workers that, contrary to speculations being peddled inside and outside the country, the state is determined to go ahead and put forward fresh initiatives to the national forces on how to complete the true democratic process before putting the to the Algerian people, the only sovereign power.

Thirdly and lastly, one of the reasons for optimism on the future of our country is the fact that Algeria is making progress and will make further progress in the economic reforms in order to guarantee a permanent economic revival.

Furthermore, the financial resources which have been generated by these reforms and the enthusiasm shown by our foreign partners, whose investments in our country are being consolidated, are a good omen for kick-starting development in Algeria.

On the other hand, the economic and social aspect of the program is aimed at fulfilling the program blessed by the nation on 16 November last — i.e focusing the current reforms and development towards the promoting of major principles of our country, among which the principles of social justice, national solidarity, and equal opportunity for all citizens will remain irreversible national options.

Ladies and gentlemen, talking optimistically about the future of Algeria is neither wishful thinking nor a demagogic slogan. Algeria indeed has the means likely to guarantee its recovery and prosperity. However, this affirmation may sound not very convincing if one does not stress the need for more effort and rigor, and the inevitable duty to cleanse behavior in society.

In fact, our people will soon reap the benefit of progress if our efforts face up to the current situation which needs to be reformed; the situation of the great subservience of our imports, and the current particular situation of our hydrocarbon exports, and also the deficiencies of our investment capacities at a time when our economy is opening up to the international market. Yes, our people will soon reap the benefits of progress if rigor is more firm in rehabilitating productive investment vis-a-vis consumption; rigor in order to get rid of waste, and to mobilize our means to produce today the wealth we will share tomorrow. Yes, our people will soon reap the benefit of progress if the purge of social scourges puts an end to favoritism, tax evasion, and sometimes waste and even bribery. This intensified effort, firmer rigor, and this necessary purge are among the challenges Algeria insists on facing up to with total determination. The Algerian people is asking for the materialization of these challenges, and on its part, the government is committed to carry out the program the nation has adopted. The Algerian community abroad is, as well, a side concerned by this work and by the required efforts.

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Ladies and gentlemen, in the last two years, public authorities took a series of initiatives to make room for the contribution by the Algerian community abroad to the efforts for national recovery. Thus, it has been made possible for Algerian scientists abroad to meet here at home in order to set up a framework for consultation and contribution to serving Algeria. Likewise, Algerian investors abroad have been given facts about the national economy to enable them to take part in economic development. [passage omitted]

There are several promising achievements that together we should start realizing. The members of the government and the state cadres, who have taken part in your debates, have spoken to you in details about these perspectives. In parallel with this, the determination to give substance to these objectives is clear as definitively shown anew by your recent debates crowned by the election of your provisional bureau. [passage omitted]

Algeria has huge resources and relies on cohesive and strong sections of the population. Algerians expatriates are a large and considerable part of these resources and these sections of the population. They should do more to serve Algeria.

In this respect, and in addition to its responsibilities to all citizens wherever they may be, you will have full support from the government which is fully prepared to open up more paths.

This is, ladies and gentlemen, the message that I urge you to convey to our sisters and brothers you represent, a message of hope, mobilization and work, the message of Algeria to its nationals. Thank you and peace and mercy of Almighty God and his blessings be upon you [applause].

Algeria: Women Set Up Organization To Fight 'Terrorist Fundamentalism'

LD0503124696 Paris Radio France International in French 0730 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In Algeria, an organization has been set up to fight against terrorist fundamentalism, L'Algerie Resistante [Algeria Unyielding]. Behind it is a group of women. Amar Ben Salem reports:

[Ben Salem] Behind this initiative is a group of women who are remaining anonymous for the time being. They aim to weave links with all who work for progress, peace, and respect for human rights, to fight, I quote, against the fundamentalist terrorist international. Lawyers' and legal experts' groups and American, German, and French political figures are reported to be ready to support this initiative. Speaking on behalf of this group of women, Mrs. Leila Aslaoui, a former minister whose husband was savagely murdered last year, said they are remaining anonymous not for reasons of safety, but rather to avoid establishing a fixed leadership. Mrs. Aslaoui explained in essence that the Algerie Resistante plan is aimed at making it possible to draw together all those standing firm against terrorism and fundamentalism within a single international movement. This initiative is being launched a few days before 8 March, International Women's Day, in a context in which terrorist attacks spare no one. At least 300 women have been murdered during the last four years.

Algeria: Security Services Kill 29 'Criminals'

LD0503202096 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The security services said in a statement today that 29 criminals were killed in the following provinces: Algiers, Medea, Mostaganem, Constantine, Jijel, Chlef, and Tlemcen.

The security forces recovered a large quantity of arms consisting of home-made weapons, hunting rifles, two machine-guns and a home-made bomb weighing five kilograms connected to a battery. They have also recovered a grenade and a quantity of ammunition and equipment. Tip-offs given by citizens, and patrols and search operations led to the recovery of the above-mentioned arsenal. The largest arsenal was recovered in Tlemcen [west of Algiers] and the most dangerous criminals among the 29 mentioned above were killed in the capital Algiers.

Egypt

Egypt: Sudan Aide in Cairo To Urge Dialogue Resumption

MM0503135996 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 5 Mar 96 p 5

[Unattributed report: "Sudanese Official in Cairo To Discuss Halt to Escalation"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, AL-HAYAH — In a sudden development, Ambassador 'Ali Muhammad 'Uthman Yasin, Sudan's representative to the United Nations began a visit to Egypt last Friday. Cairo and the Sudanese Embassy have imposed a blackout on his visit.

AL-HAYAH has learned that the Sudanese official's visit, which will continue until Thursday, is aimed at persuading Egyptian officials to resume the Egyptian-Sudanese dialogue suspended in July 1993, and to work to prevent an escalation in the disagreements. [passage omitted]

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Egypt: Officials Accuse Sudan of 'Provocations'

MM0603130096 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 6 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Kamal Hamid and Muhammad Salah: "Sudan Accuses Egypt of Shelling Areas in Hala'ib"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Khartoum, Cairo — [passage omitted] In Cairo, Egyptian officials have told AL-HAYAH that Egypt is exercising its sovereignty over part of its territory [the Hala'ib triangle], and it will reply to any aggression against its security. The sources denied that Egyptian forces attacked Sudanese forces in the area, accusing Sudanese authorities of trying to cause provocations.

The sources said that the Khartoum government continues to fabricate situations and write songs about the liberation of the north (Hala'ib) to inflame nationalistic feelings and create a history of hostility in the mind of the Sudanese people. The sources said that this "is the most serious aspect of the whole matter." However, the sources stressed their confidence in the Sudanese people's far-sightedness and their rejection of the policies pursued by the Sudanese regime and the National Islamic Front.

The Egyptian sources accused the Sudanese Government of "trying to circumvent the Sudanese people after the dilemma caused by Security Council Resolution 1044, to give the impression that the resolution is a punishment for its so-called Islamic project and disagreements with Egypt." Cairo urged Khartoum not to "drag relations between the two peoples into the recent developments."

Egypt: Mubarak Cables Condolences to Weizman on Blast

NC0603074196 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0500 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Muhammad Husni Mubarak has stated that the recent terrorist activities in Israel aim to destroy the peace process and return the region to violence and destruction. He said that peaceloving countries must confront such criminal incidents. President Mubarak said this in a cable of condolences to Israeli President 'Ezer Weizman on the victims of the blast in Tel Aviv the day before yesterday claiming numerous lives and wounding many.

Egypt is continuing its contacts with the Palestinian and Israeli sides to contain the effects of the recent incidents in order to continue the peace process.

Egypt: Musa on Contacts To Contain Bombing 'Repercussions'

NC0503145996 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1405 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 5 Mar (MENA)—Egypt is continuing its contacts with the Palestinian and Israeli sides, with the aim of containing the repercussions of recent incidents and maintaining the peace process.

Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said today that he has contacted his Israeli counterpart Ehud Baraq and also contacted Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat. He added that Egypt's contacts deal with recent developments, and that Egypt is underlining the importance of continuing the peace process and taking the necessary steps for pulling the rug out from under the enemies of peace and extremists on both sides.

In response to a question about Israel's recall of its delegation to the negotiations with Syria in Maryland, Musa said that the Israeli side noted that the recall of the Israeli side from the United States has nothing to do with the negotiations process with Syria.

Egypt: Musa Views Relations With Israel, Sudan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia

NC0603075096 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0031 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] London, 6 Mar (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has declared that the peace process has reached a point where it is difficult to stop. Otherwise the peace would remain incomplete, he noted.

In an interview with the London-based English-language newspaper ARAB NEWS published on Wednesday [6 March], Musa said this process is still in its beginning. He pointed out that the most difficult negotiations will be between the Palestinians and the Israelis, because they will deal with the five biggest issues, namely, Jerusalem, the Israeli settlements, the refugees, self- determination, and the permanent status of the Palestinian entity. He asserted that peace will not be achieved unless the Palestinians and Israelis sign a treaty providing for the establishment of a Palestinian state.

Commenting on Egypt's position on normalization with Israel, 'Amr Musa remarked: Relations between us are normal and involve agreeing on some issues and disagreeing on others. If Israel's idea about normalization is that we should humor it in every area and not annoy it, we reject this idea. We will not be anyone's puppet or conduct our policies to please any party's agenda, regardless of who this party is. We will implement our own agenda whether it makes Israel happy or miserable.

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The foreign minister reiterated Egypt's demand that Israel join the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and declared that no agreements on regional security or political arrangements can succeed unless they include the Israeli nuclear program.

'Amr Musa rejected the idea of establishing a Middle Eastern bloc of nations before the concerned parties agree on a clear formula for a comprehensive and just peace that includes a solution of the Palestinian issue.

The foreign minister urged the Arab countries to try harder to cooperate and show solidarity with each other to confront any challenges.

He added: We must not accuse others. We must accuse ourselves if the Arab mind fails to grasp that if it wants to preserve its identity and emphasize its cohesiveness, it must be more active than it has been so far in providing the means of Arab cooperation.

He continued: If we prove unable or unwilling to do this and if each Arab country places its own narrow interests above pan-Arab interests, then the only people we should blame will be ourselves.

'Amr Musa said the Arab League is a necessary mark of our civilization and must not be attacked, even if it is not serviceable now.

He said: We must preserve the Arab League and every other Arab forum because we are living in a period when we should not dismantle any Arab organization. On the contrary, we must consolidate every such organization and emphasize its role.

Concerning the current call to Sudan to hand over three people suspected of involvement in the assassination attempt against President Husni Mubarak in June 1995, 'Amr Musa urged Sudan either to hand over the suspects or prove its innocence to the UN Security Council.

Musa remarked: We are not asking Sudan to pursue one specific policy or abandon another. We do not have the right to do this. Nevertheless, we do not find it acceptable when it exceeds its bounds and provokes others. First, this is unacceptable. Second, it cannot succeed. Third, Sudan must pay the price of such excesses.

Regarding Egypt's policy toward Iraq, the foreign minister said that Egypt wants to preserve Iraq's territorial integrity and opposes any plans to partition it. He blamed the Iraqi leadership for bringing calamity to Iraq and expressed doubts about recent events in which Lieutenant General Husayn Kamil and his companions were killed.

He said: Iraq's behavior has reinforced a bad image that shows the Arabs to be treacherous.

'Amr Musa described Egypt's relations with Saudi Arabia as "pivotal relations" that must always remain strong and close.

He said: If a summer cloud was gathering over these relations, it has now passed, thank God. Neither of the two countries can do without the other.

Egypt: Dailies Voice Concern Over Fate of Peace Process

NC0603074496 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0600 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 5 Mar (MENA)--AL-JUMHURIYAH and AL-AHRAM voice concern over the Middle East peace process following the suicide operations carried out in Jerusalem, Ashqelon, and Tel Aviv in the past few days. These operations left 50 dead and hundreds wounded, they add.

In its comment today, AL-JUMHURIYAH points to remarks by Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat that the operations are part of a foreign plot, which, regrettably, used Palestinians to carry out the operations.

The paper urges all the sides not to submit to such operations and to forge ahead with the negotiations over the final status of the occupied territories. AL-JUMHURIYAH says that the peace advocates in Israel expect the Israeli Government to respond to sound logic now that it has been proven that peace with its neighbors is the shield [siyaj] that can defend security. This peace can be achieved by submitting to international legitimacy and approving the UN resolutions, including the land-for-peace principle.

AL-AHRAM says the acts of violence will not curb the peace process. The paper notes that for over 50 months, since October 1991, the Palestinian and Lebanese territories have been the scene of violent armed clashes without their affecting the settlement process.

AL-AHRAM says that although violence has not halted peace, the recent acts of violence can obstruct and freeze peace at a critical stage. These acts can also trigger various political developments that will not favor the Palestinian people.

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Egypt: Muslim Brotherhood Said Facing 'Violent Crisis'

MM0503144996 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 5 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by Abduh Zaynah in Cairo: "Violent Crisis Within Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood Caused by Conflict Between Old and New Guard"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Sources in the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood [MB], whose activities are banned, have confirmed that the MB faces a violent crisis, especially with regard to its structures. The sources said that the current MB crisis is more damaging than the previous crises, such as the 1954 and 1966 crises during the time of the late President Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir, since it is not about confronting external forces as is usually the case, but concerns the effectiveness of organizational action, the basis on which the MB has relied until now to remain an effective element in public action.

The sources have also told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that MB members have been hit by lethargy and apathy and have surrendered to the security and government sieges, which previously did not prevent the MB from carrying out its activities in its known areas. [passage omitted]

The sources indicated that the main reason for this crisis within the MB is a divergence of views between the MB's generations on methods of action and on implementing the MB's procedures, indicating that the generation of MB shaykhs differs very much in ideology and vision from the generation of young people who were brought up in a peaceful and open lifestyle, away from the necessities of secret action in which the first generation was brought up. Hence, approaches differ with regard to the issues of openness, secrecy, and unguarded involvement in popular action, which is not in line with the views of many shaykhs whose life has always been full of caution. [passage omitted]

Egypt: Labor Federation Chief Views Privatization

NC0503214996 Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 1 Mar 96 pp 26, 27

[Interview with al-Sayyid Rashid, chairman of the Egyptian General Federation of Labor Unions, by Ghali Muhammad; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Muhammad] What is the federation's stand regarding privatization and the economic transformation?

[Rashid] We are not against privatization, proceeding from our unlimited confidence in the policies of President Husni Mubarak, who always emphasizes the need not to harm any worker. To us the concept of privatization means broadening the base of ownership by selling shares, provided that at least 10 percent of these shares goes to workers, and the rest goes to Egyptians, Arabs, then foreigners, in cases where a rare type of technology is needed. This is what happened in the Steam Boilers' Company, which was entirely sold to foreigners, who possess an advanced technology in this industry. When we say that a specific percentage of shares should go to foreigners, the point is to prevent foreign capital from dominating the national economy.

[Muhammad] What is the relation between this concept and the protection of the workers' rights?

[Rashid] As far as the protection of workers is concerned, it does not matter to us who owns the shares. However, we want to keep a balance within the companies and factories to maintain stable working relations between the owners of the companies—the employers—and the employees. We want to see the decisions made through agreement and conviction by the two sides, particularly by the trade unionists, who can defend these decisions before the majority of workers. Perhaps for these reasons we prefer the selling of up to 49 percent of the shares of any company, provided the state keeps the remaining 51 percent, which would give it the right to appoint an Egyptian administration that has faith in this homeland. By this we do not mean any administration, but a professional administration that believes in the principle of reward and punishment.

[Muhammad] But the Business Sector Ministry has recently announced a plan to completely sell 14 companies?

[Rashid] We do not object to the principle of full privatization. It is certain that the government has decided to sell these companies on the basis of economic studies. What interests us is to see a fair assessment of the assets of each company, that contracts explicitly state that workers will be kept in general, and not for a specific period; and that the same type of activity is maintained. In all cases, we support the full sale of nonessential and nonstrategic industries. Consequently, it does not concern us who will own these industries, even if they were foreigners. The important thing is to provide new guarantees and benefits to the workers.

[Muhammad] Then why did the General Federation's Board of Directors declare a state of emergency following the Cabinet's announcement of the privatization program for 1996?

[Rashid] We have indeed declared a state of emergency, which will continue, because we read in the press remarks by the business sector minister about the

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privatization but we do not know anything. We want to be actively involved in all procedures, including the assessment and the preparation and drafting of contracts, to maintain the gains and rights of workers. Not only this. The trade unions must know the selling price, because we have helped build these companies and factories to be sold. Accordingly, we have called for an urgent meeting with Prime Minister Dr. al-Janzuri so that he could clarify things for us, particularly regarding the protection of workers.

[Muhammad] Do you think that the market could absorb all these shares offered for sale?

[Rashid] I believe that the demand will be weak, particularly in cases of full privatization, because the market capacity is limited, investors are cautious, and it is better for the capital to be invested in projects free of labor problems and to gain tax exemptions. While accelerating privatization is required, gradual privatization is also required.

[Muhammad] Why do the workers not buy some of these companies?

[Rashid] Our workers are poor and their income is limited. Where would they come up with savings with which to buy? Had our workers had savings we would have asked for a bigger share for them than the 10 percent of shares, but this is difficult.

[Muhammad] But there are subsidiaries for the Works Holding Company more than 90 percent of which are owned by the workers.

[Rashid] This is because Chairman of the Holding Company Engineer 'Abd-al-Ghani Hasan gave them facilities. If Minister of Business Sector Dr. 'Atif 'Ubayd is willing to provide such facilities, there is no objection to the workers buying small units.

[Muhammad] How do you think the funds resulting from the sale will be used?

[Rashid] These funds have to be designated to repair financing structures of loss-making companies on the condition that they be run by a methodical administration without flattery or favoritism, an administration subject to rules of punishment and reward, especially because we are not accustomed to punishing erring administrations. Indeed I have documents incriminating the administrations of more than 10 companies. We sent these documents to the business sector minister but no action was taken.

[Muhammad] Once again, why do you insist on participating in the sale processes? Do you not trust those in charge of the sale? Is is a prelude to a confrontation with company administrations?

[Rashid] When the sale of such a large number of companies is announced, there must be a moment of deliberation. We share the responsibility and there has to be explanation and dialogue because we want to avoid mistakes and do not seek confrontation.

[Muhammad] Is there an opposition within the Labor Federation's board of directors? There are views suggesting that you absolutely support this program because you are member of the [ruling] National Democratic Party.

[Rashid] What is certain is that there is no opposition to the privatization program by any member because there is a law in place governing this issue, Business Sector Law no. 203. However, there is fear of the sale procedures.

As regards the statement that I support this program because I am member of the National Democratic Party, it is not true. I support the program out of concern about the national economy's interest without compromising the workers' rights. Originally I am an Egyptian worker who preserves the sanctity of the trust. When I feel that I have betrayed this trust, I will quit my post.

[Muhammad] How do you assess the sale of the Boilers, Coca-Cola, and Pepsi companies?

As regards the Boilers Company, its situation is better after it was sold. It is now operating efficiently with modern technology, so the workers work more and get more incentives and privileges and there are no complaints.

But in the case of the Coca-Cola and Pepsi companies, even though the sale was effected in a good manner and with consent from the trade unions committee and the Labor Federation, some strange things have happened. The two companies raised the price of their products and then announced that they were losing. I cannot find any explanation for their non-profitability. Before these two companies were sold, their workers used to get three months' profits as incentives. Today they receive almost nothing.

This is in addition to problems like the company administrations' failure to insure the changing wages. What is more serious are the psychological pressures exercised against workers by the two companies' administrations. Yet we are not tired and will pursue the dialogue to solve the problems of the two companies' workers.

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Egypt: Pentagon Said Planning To Build 4 Bases in Region

NC0503201996 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 1 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Mahmud Bakri]

[FBIS Translated Text] The U.S. Defense Department, the Pentagon, has prepared a plan to establish four new military bases serving the U.S. Fifth and Sixth Fleets, as part of Washington's policy of dual containment of Iran and Iraq.

The Pentagon has put forward a detailed plan in this regard for the establishment of these four bases in three Arab states, one in North Africa, two in the middle of the Arabian Peninsula, and the fourth south of the Arabian Peninsula. Under the plan, the new bases will serve as centers of command, communication, planning, and joint exercises. They also will be used to store large quantities of advanced U.S. weapons.

According to the plan, the United States is supposed to be prepared to respond to any military operations by Iraq or Iraq threatening the region's security 15 minutes from the outbreak of these operations. The U.S. operation would shift from a defensive to an offensive position within one hour at most. The aircraft could be used with high efficiency within 45 minutes, and human military reinforcements should be sufficient within only 8 hours.

The U.S. plan is the main plan to tighten security in the Gulf. According to sources, the Pentagon has made important military additions to the advanced command center in Bahrain and the U.S. rapid deployment forces will be used to confront some acts of violence in the region.

Libya

Libya: Information Minister Denies Clash With Egyptian Travelers

NC0403074696 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0017 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 3 Mar (MENA)—Fawziyah Shallabi, Libyan secretary of the General People's Committee for Information and Culture, has denied recent newspaper reports of clashes between Libyan customs officials and Egyptian travelers at al-Sallum on the Libyan-Egyptian border. In a press statement in Cairo today she said these reports are baseless. She stressed the deep and special relations linking the one Arab people in Libya and Egypt. She noted the common interests and the political, strategic, economic, and social bonds that link the Libyan Arab people and the fraternal Egyptian people. She said the newspaper reports indicate a lack of understanding of the customs procedures that every arrival in Libya must observe so as not to break the law.

Shallabi emphasized the strong Egyptian-Libyan relations, thanks to direct instructions to strengthen them by Libyan revolution leader Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi and his brother President Husni Mubarak. She also asserted Libya's commitment to abide by all the agreements signed with Egypt, noting that the Basic Peoples Congress' resolutions and recommendations in the Libyan Jamahiriyah confirm this regarding relations with fraternal Egypt.

Shallabi noted that Libyan law bans the reexport of subsidized commodities from Libya, be it by Libyan citizens, residents, or arrivals in Libya. She noted that according to the law an attempt to reexport these commodities is considered to be tax evasion and must be immediately confronted and stopped in view of its direct and detrimental effect on the Libyan economy. Concluding her statement, she called on Arab, foreign, and local media to verify their reports.

Libya: Al-Qadhdhafi Speech at Surt 2 Mar

LD0303003296 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1807 GMT 2 Mar 96

[Speech by Libyan leader Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi at Surt — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the name of God — Brothers, gentlemen, we congratulate ourselves on this really historic day, the anniversary of the proclamation of people's power and the jamahiriyah, the first jamahiriyah in contemporary history [applause]. Today's meeting marks the 20th anniversary of people's power [applause]. What is really historic is that this is the first jamahiriyah in contemporary history, something that we Libyans are proud of. Likewise, the Libyan people is the sole people in the world that governs itself and exercises power directly — not through delegation, representation, or somebody speaking on their behalf. On this occasion we meet the popular leaderships here present in this large conference hall, that is the popular social leadership of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah [applause].

Without deceiving ourselves, without courtesy, without any propaganda, I believe that we mark this anniversary convinced that elections are humbug and so are parties, governments, and presidents. The world is daily offering us evidence to the correctness of our line, and to the fact that we alone have set foot on the road to a radical and historic solution. I believe that worldwide when one now mentions elections everybody laughs, realizing that elections mean falsification. From America to Togo all elections are falsified.

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All elections are faked. The greatest country, America, which presents itself as the one solving the problems of the world, publicly buys voices. As an example, the President buys the voices of the Jews, publicly accepts bribes, lies to people, and puts forward to them a faked program so that they will vote for him. What did the American President, who presently is in power, put forward during 4 years to the Americans? He said to the Americans that he would like to govern them and that the Democrats would like to be in office. He told them: Please back me with your money so that I will be your president, and after that, I will look after America, its economy, its internal affairs, and its appalling internal problems. I will deal with the American economy, which is suffering from a more that 100 billion dollar budget deficit. He also told them that he was not paying any more attention to the problems of the world, adding that people had to sort it out by themselves, that the Americans were not their patrons, and that America was not the gendarme of the world. The current president criticized the policy of the previous Republicans, saying that he was going to pay attention to the problems of the Americans, improve the health system, get rid of unemployment, inflation, and the high cost of living, and make sure that the millions of homeless would have a decent life.

The Americans were happy and voted for him, and after that, he forgot America and started launching missiles at Baghdad, declaring an embargo against Libya, imposing a blockade against Yugoslavia, and dispatching his troops to the Balkans. He also tried to solve the problems between the Irish and the British, and then tried to solve the problems of Somalia by sending American troops who died in their hundreds in undeclared battles. The Americans then asked: Where is the program you put forward to us? Did not you say that when I win the elections, I will deal with America's internal affairs? Why do you bother about the problems of the world? Why should we interfere in Somalia or Ireland? Nowadays, any president has won by carrying out a fabricated program, by lying, and people today are witnessing this, by noticing that their presidents are lying to them. Nowadays in the world, whoever wins 20 percent of the votes wins the majority. They say he won the majority. This, as you noticed, was the case with all the elections which were held during this year in many countries. [passage omitted].

You have seen what the parties are doing in Yugoslavia. Parties have torn Yugoslavia apart. They did the same in Somalia, Zaire, and Russia, the Soviet Union. At present, all the world is being torn apart because of pluralism and parties' conflicts. Partisanship has become real threat to the unity of nations and societies and their interests. Elections have become a farce and a falsification. The word elections now means falsification. [passage omitted]

The first spontaneous subjective outcome as a result of the power of the people and the freedom of the masses was the birth of popular leadership, which is present now in this large hall. [applause]

At this meeting and at this historical day, we want to install the popular leaderships of the great Jamahiriyah; that is, you, you are the popular social leaderships of the Libyan people. We also want to adopt the constitution of the popular leadership that should clarify its responsibilities and help the public understand its role.

Each region of the great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah shall have its own Popular Social Leadership [PSL]. This PSL is be set up by its own local residents.

The PSL shall have jurisdiction over the region's territory and population.

Each PSL shall have a number of coordinators and one general coordinator. The coordinators shall form the Great Jamahiriyah's body of coordinators. The general coordinators shall constitute the Great Jamahiriyah's body of general coordinators. The general coordinators shall have a [national] general coordinator, to be elected by every six months in accordance with age, alphabetical order, or ability.

The body of the regional secretaries shall constitute the Jamahiriyah's National Popular Social Leadership.

The PSL shall be a permanent body unless disqualified.

The general coordinator shall have the right to summon coordinators for a meeting at any time. The coordinators shall have also the right to ask the general coordinators for a meeting. The national general coordinator and the general coordinators shall have the right to summon members of the PSL for a meeting at any level.

Every regional PSL shall draw up its own constitution but in accordance with this general constitution.

The national general coordinator, the general coordinators, the regional coordinators, and the Popular Social Leaderships at regional and national levels may suggest and carry out any necessary and sufficient punishment against any member or any coordinator.

The Popular Social Leadership is the engine of the masses, its orientator and its guide. It strengthens and entrenches people's power, and it is the melting pot of the masses of every region who then form one

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national unit. The Popular Social Leadership is the national leading umbrella for all the forces, structures, and militants in the Jamahiriyah at any level. They are entitled to take all initiatives in the interest of people's power and the homeland in peace, war, and confrontation [applause].

If we agree on this statute it will from now become the internal statute of the Popular Social Leadership at the level of the Jamahiriyah [applause]. Before its adoption, let me explain it a little. Every region — about 47 or 50 regions in the Jamahiriyah — has its own popular leadership composed of the popular militants. At previous meetings, we have already spoken about what a popular militant is, and you understand it. This Popular Social Leadership in a region has coordinators. The coordinators come under a regional coordinator. Therefore, there will be in the Jamahiriyah 47 general coordinators, each of whom has a group of regional coordinators under him. There will be approximately 500 coordinators, and 47 or 50 general coordinators. The regional Popular Social Leaderships constitute the Popular Social Leadership of the Jamahiriyah, which is present here in this conference hall. The 47 or 50 regional general coordinators should at this meeting choose one of them as the general coordinator of the Popular Social Leadership for all the Jamahiriyah for six months, then somebody else will be chosen. [passage omitted]

The general coordinator and the 47 regional coordinators may convene meetings of the 500 local coordinators. Likewise, regional coordinators may convene meetings with the local coordinators. The general coordinator, the regional coordinators, and the local coordinators may call for meetings of the popular leadership at any level, at national or regional level. Because the popular leadership is not an administrative or political body but rather an ordinary popular social leadership, it should not be tied up with minute details. For example, in a situation like this, regarding punishment, it should not be fixed rigidly like in administrations where a committee chairman, a company manager, or a party chairman may stop a salary, issue disciplinary punishment, or dismiss people. No, this is different. Concerning the work of the popular social leadership, the general coordinator, the regional coordinators, all the regional or national popular social leadership may decide any necessary and sufficient punishment of a leadership member who loses credibility. You meet and decide the nature of punishment, which must be necessary and sufficient. [passage omitted]

The national popular social leadership whose members are here present, or the regional popular leadership, may, without any restrictions, put forward any initiatives, plans, ideas, suggestions, measures, arrangements, changes liable to strengthen people's power and benefit the homeland. So long as they are meant to strengthen people's power and benefit the homeland, there are no restrictions at all on them, and you are free to act at national and regional levels. [applause]

The task of popular leadership is to strengthen the people's power, to entrench the people's power. Even if the membership of the local popular leadership in any region has been constituted on a family or social basis, in the end, when the popular leadership of a region is formed, it immediately becomes a national cohesive unity completely disregarding family, tribal, and similar considerations. [applause] It becomes a national regional leadership of the region in question, a melting pot for all tribal and family-related disputes. [passage omitted]

At this meeting of the popular social leadership we think about the leadership of all the Libyan masses, all the Libyan people. The same should happen at regional level. We here do not think just about our 47 regions. We think about the Jamahiriyah, its interest, how to entrench people's power not just in our regions of origin but in all the Jamahiriyah, in the 350 communes, how they can govern themselves.

After this meeting, the popular leadership of every region will meet under the supervision of the group of regional coordinators and the general regional coordinator. They then will lay down their own internal statutes which should be in agreement with this general internal statute of the national popular leadership at the level of the Jamahiriyah. [passage omitted]

The popular social leadership is the national leadership umbrella of all the forces, cadres, and authorities at all levels in the Jamahiriyah. We must understand this term. [passage omitted]

This means that this leadership can ask the General People's Congress to hold meetings for the people's congresses, for a given congress, or for a given region. It can ask the General People's Congress to hold meetings for itself or for the people's congresses at any level, sectional committees, General People's Congresses of companies, committees, communes. This will later become clear to the general coordinator, the groups of coordinators of the regions, the groups of general coordinators. You can improve the resolution in the future. The most important thing is that when you go back each region should hold a meeting and draft an internal motion in accordance with this resolution. [applause] The official name of your country is the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah. Thank you. [applause] This means a Socialist Jamahiriyah.

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Any system, any economic activity which is not socialistic is considered illicit in the country called the Socialist Jamahiriyah. [applause] I would like to say this: we the Libyans should not be forced to implement capital punishment. It is up to you really. The committees abolished capital punishment a long time ago, but there has been strong opposition to the abolition of capital punishment. Some said that since the law of society is the Koran, the latter provides for capital punishment and regards it as one of God's punishments. [applause]

I wish we did not have to chop hands off because we need every hand available, nor any legs. [noise in the background] I also wish we did not have to lock people up and deprive them of their freedom for life, I mean life sentences or 20-year jail sentences. None of us wishes to see people have their hands, legs, or heads chopped off or to see people locked up for 20 years or for life. We do not wish that for any Libyan, but as I have already told you we are not having a party or a banquet, we are talking about the fate of a nation and the fate of the generations that will come after us, therefore we cannot be negligent about it or play with it. This is a serious historical responsibility.

Anyone who harms this process for their own interest; anyone who harms the future of our children, grandchildren, and homeland for their own interest and ignores our future and that of the future generations; anyone who does not want to live by conviction, honesty, and hard work but lives off ill-gotten gains — society will be forced to chop off their hands, the hands which stole and plundered. [applause] Unfortunately, we will be forced to chop off the legs of those who rob, attack, or frighten people by raiding their homes. [applause] We will also be forced to chop off the head of anyone whose life poses a threat or undermines society. [applause]

Consequently, brothers, since you yourselves believe that there is a blockade — naturally, we know that there is a blockade imposed on Iraq and there was one imposed on Serbia or Yugoslavia, but this has now been lifted — a blockade means that a country is prevented from exporting or importing. Anything going to that country or leaving it is intercepted and is inspected, just as is the case for Iraq now. A ship carrying dates from Iraq to be sold abroad was seized and Iraq was told it was not allowed to do that.

There is no embargo imposed on Libya. Libya is free to export or import and no one is inspecting the goods coming to Libya or intercepting them at sea or on the road. However, there is a U.S. boycott against Libya and the United States is putting pressure on other states, asking them not to export to Libya. The United States is not intercepting ships in the sea or anywhere else, but we see this at ports — arms destined for Libya or leaving Libya [as heard].

There is an embargo on arms. Equipment used in the oil industry, the manufacture of missiles, the atom [as heard], or anything of the sort is included in the black list of the things that cannot be sold to Libya. However, no one intercepts things destined for Libya, at sea or on the road. That would be a blockade as stipulated in the UN Charter. In any case, you said that there was a blockade when in fact it is groups boycotting Libya. Britain, America, and France are boycotting Libya and other states hear about sanctions issued by the so-called Security Council — an attempt to freeze Libyan assets, the air embargo, a ban on arms sales to Libya, the non- provision of banking facilities to Libya, and things of the sort. All these measures constitute a climate which suggests a blockade or that there is a blockade. However, this climate which has been created around Libya, the attempts to make it bow down, and the attempts to reduce its sovereignty so that it hands over its children to have them tried in America or Britain, this affects our independence, sovereignty, and dignity.

There is (?a conspiracy) against the Arab nation and the peoples of the Third World in general, to prevent them from becoming industrialized or developed, to make them always dependent on Europe and America.

This is obvious, colonialism is still the same. Confrontation with colonialism is still going on, but brothers, you see the current atmosphere and what the enemy wants to do to us. They wish that we would be poor, in need, that we would be destroyed, and be powerless. You have seen them annihilating Iraq, Iraqi families selling the doors of their houses and their furniture to buy something as a result of the blockade imposed on Iraq. [passage omitted]

If there were some Libyans in the midst of this atmosphere who take advantage to increase prices, smuggle, and deal in foreign currency, they then have joined the enemy. Is it logical, at this critical moment, when courage and patience are needed, and when it is necessary to tighten one's belt and be content, that one takes advantage of the situation, steals, and puts up prices in order to undermine the Libyan currency with the U.S. one? Is it possible to plunder public funds or to cause terrorism in Libya? Is it not enough to undergo the great powers' terrorism? U.S. terrorism. More still — you find that some people set up gangs and perpetrate terrorism; you find people who are secretly armed, veiled, who jump over walls into homes. All these things must be stopped. I warn them, and go back to what I said at the beginning: There is none among us

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wishing harm to fellow Libyans. [Crowd chants: Believe us, O leader; We shall not show pity to traitors].

Do not say to me: Show no mercy. Say instead: We will not show any mercy. It is you who will not show any mercy toward the traitor [applause; crowd chants: We will show no mercy towards the traitor] I mean, brothers... [Al-Qadhdhafi is interrupted by a poet reaffirming Libya's steadfastness and praising the leader; crowd chants slogans; another speaker praises al-Qadhdhafi and recites a poem]

[Al-Qadhdhafi continues] Brothers, I had cited Iraq as a bad example, and I want now to warn you, while we have time, to avoid finding ourselves in a bad situation. Brothers, we are now selling oil, there is no embargo against us, we are exporting anything we produce without objection from anyone, and we import what we want from anywhere in the world. We want to benefit from this propitious time so as to be able to face up to any grave developments in the future. I have told you that there is a colonialist intention to make sure that the Arab nation is destroyed, and remains divided and weak. There is also an intention to prevent the emergence of a strong country in the Third World, which is meant to be a consumer market for America. It is very clear that America wants to dominate the world, but we reject domination and we will fight to the last man. This is known. [applause].

Therefore, we make plans to benefit from the current time so as to be able to face up to any eventuality, and we will not allow anything that would weaken us at the domestic level, marginalize our lives, and make them futile. Let me now deal with the points I want to make to you in this respect. [Al-Qadhdhafi notices people attempting to leave the room] Make way for anyone who needs to go out, without discussions; let people get in and out; do not keep people in against their will, without discussions. [applause].

From now on in Libya we shall recognize only the Libyan dinar, the Libyan currency [applause]. Possessing foreign currency shall be considered as high treason, and anyone found in possession of foreign currency shall be executed, or shall have his hands or feet chopped off [applause].

What is called dollar is an American currency, an enemy's currency which we will never recognize in Libya. It is used in America; it is their currency. Furthermore, in the coming evening, God willing, the Libyan bank and the Treasury will show you the quantities of forged dollars they had from Libyan markets. Some poor ordinary citizens who do not know about these things exchange dinars for forged dollars. You will see quantities of forged dollars which you cannot differentiate from genuine dollars. The Americans themselves are very worried to see international gangs which forge currencies and which have arrived at the point of knowing the rare substance from which currency is made.

We will meet with the foreign companies working in Libya. Any company introducing dollars to Libya without depositing them in the central bank and exchanging them into Libyan dinars would be in contravention of Libyan laws. This company could have all its equipment confiscated, it could be expelled and not paid, and its staff could be jailed [applause]. Embassies in Libya should introduce hard currency to the country, deposit it in the Libyan central bank, and exchange it into Libyan money to spend in the Libyan market. If this currency is not introduced through the central bank, any such embassy or any of its member is open to accountability, and the embassy could be closed. We do not care. We are in a position to do without all embassies because they are an old fashioned system. They were set up when countries in the world were not able to communicate between each other. [passage omitted]

Nowadays, we don't need these embassies if they sabotage the country, if they introduce alcohol and illegal hard currency. [passage omitted].

How can someone get drunk? From where did he get the alcohol? It must be through a foreign embassy, a foreign company. Anyone drinking alcohol in Libya is an ally of the foreign powers which are our enemies. We don't want any Libyan to be drunk. We want everyone to be sober [applause]. We will meet with foreign embassies and companies. They will be severely warned. It is not permitted at all for foreign companies or embassies to sabotage Libya, and we will be happy if we can get rid of all foreign companies. Any Libyan abroad working in People's Bureaus, or studying, or being treated in the hospital, is of course provided with hard currency by Libya. It happens that not all this hard currency is spent by these Libyans who return to the country with the money spared, and they exchange it in the black market.

If we find some foreign currency which has not come from embassies or foreign companies, the first person to be accused should know from this point onward that they might be summoned and questioned at any time and that they might receive the harsh punishment we have mentioned, and that could be capital punishment. In other words, you, X, are one of the people who have the list [sentence as heard]. For the sake of argument if there are 1,000 Libyans abroad who are being paid in foreign currency, these people could be exposed to questioning at any time and could also be accused. If

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one of them brings back hard currency let him or her be aware of this.

If one brings back foreign currency, there is the Libyan bank, the central bank. By all means, bring any surplus of foreign currency and deposit it at the bank and take dinars in its place. If an embassy has hard currency it has received from the country it represents, it must deposit it at the Libyan bank and take dinars in its place. If a company receives foreign currency from its country it must deposit that currency at the central bank and take dinars in its place. If a Libyan national sells something abroad and is paid in foreign currency this currency should reach him through the bank.

Anyone who traffics in foreign currency and creates a black market for currency, he is harming the economy and thus exposes himself to execution. It is possible. The congresses could decide on execution for the things I have been talking about.

When a Libyan delegation goes abroad it takes with it foreign currency. Either it receives it from the People's Bureaus or it takes the money from here through the bank. This delegation might not spend all that foreign currency. If a delegation on a visit or on any other kind of trip returns home from abroad with foreign currency in the pockets of its members who intend to sell it on the Libyan market, these people will expose themselves to danger. The difference between what is licit and what is illicit is very clear [applause].

Let us recapitulate: if foreign currency is found on the Libyan market without having gone through the bank, this will harm the Libyan economy and will expose its owner to danger. If anyone wants foreign currency let them go to the bank to buy it. If it is available, you will get three dollars for one dinar [applause]. Yes, go to the bank. Everything concerning foreign currency has to go through the central bank. Anything done outside this bank is considered as outside the law and an offense and there is no way we can be lenient about it.

[Passage omitted] Engaging in foreign trade without a license means smuggling, and he who engages in it is an enemy who deals with an enemy, destroys the Libyan economy, and steals the bread of our children. Things must clear: there will be no tolerance where this is concerned. [passage omitted]

Drugs are an American and Israeli weapon to lull the senses of the youths of the Arab nation. They are the most dangerous of weapons. [passage omitted]

According to statistics, car accidents cost 3,000 Libyan lives a year, while 20,000 people are maimed. So, there is no problem if we cut the throats of 3,000 people a year to cleanse society from drunkards, drug addicts, smugglers, hard currency traffickers, and dealers [applause].

I tell you, popular leaderships, that this issue should be brought before the People's Congresses which will meet in two or three sessions, or even for a day. These congresses would agree or disagree on the most severe punishment. I told you that I wish that capital punishment is abolished, but these crimes deserve capital punishment. Hard currency traffickers, smugglers, drunkards, dealers, speculators, drug addicts — all of them deserve the death penalty. Everyone should think of himself and his family before engaging in this kind of business. If the congresses decided to introduce capital punishment, there will be capital punishment.

The congresses will also be asked to determine the products you want. What products do we Libyans need? None of us is allowed to bring to Libya goods because he can make a profit out of them. [passage omitted]

I mean that the congresses decide which goods we the Libyans would like to see enter our country. The goods we do not want should be included on the blacklist that specifies which ones cannot be allowed in. We should also specify which ones we need, and if we have the money we will buy them.

The other point concerns your consumption, brothers. You, as popular leaderships throughout the Jamahiriyah, must have the highest level of awareness because you are above the congresses, the committees, the companies, the revolutionary committees, and the like. You are the leadership. The congresses and the committees exercise power and are in charge of management. The implementation of the people's power takes place at the congresses and the committees. This is where the Libyans really exercise power. However, you are the leadership and you must be qualified for this serious responsibility which you have. It is great if Libya has a leadership made up of thousands. This is the great thing achieved by the revolution [applause].

The free people know how to save themselves and guide themselves. Look at the setbacks which befall the peoples who are sold and bought. These are the peoples who are bought like sheep. They are being sold and bought and are thrown into losing contests and battles. The people themselves are responsible. Whether it is a losing or winning battle sometimes the people must decide when it is necessary to enter it. If it is necessary to enter it, so be it. It is a matter which is imposed or has to do with dignity. Winning or losing is no longer the issue. It is an inescapable duty. If sometimes we realize that the battle is unnecessary or cannot be won, why should we enter it? Just like the person who occupied Kuwait. Why did he do it since he did not anticipate

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any of the consequences? How come? He caused the ruin of his people some of whom started selling doors. Someone who had been to Kuwait sold the door of a house.

If he [Saddam Husayn] had continued to threaten Kuwait, it would have given him everything without occupation or annexation. His annexation and his occupation was for nothing. The opposite happened; it was Iraq which ended up being occupied. [passage omitted]

You should produce and consume. [passage omitted] Production is in accordance with consumption and consumption is in accordance with production, and then you decide what kind of goods the distributors need. [passage omitted] The congresses decided to have the monopoly on the internal and external trade and this remains a fact. [passage omitted]

Let us have some quiet. The issues that you need to reconsider and for which you must order the convening of people's congress to discuss and make decisions on are the punishments to be applied to those dealing in the foreign currency black market, commercial agents, speculation, smuggling, drugs, and intoxicants. [indistinct comment from the crowd]

No, you have passed a special law on theft. It is final; those who steal will have their hand cut off. There will be no mercy.

It is required that the punishments for these six items are to be determined. The punishments are to be determined by the people's congresses — it has to be the death penalty so that these evils are eliminated. There must be no compromise in the confrontation stage. These are the punishments which have to be discussed at the congress. [passage omitted]

When we say Libya is the country of all Arabs, we mean that any Arab may become Libyan, from tomorrow he may become a Libyan farmer, worker, and even a civil servant. This implies that he and his family must live in Libya. This is what is meant by the country of all Arabs, otherwise, the Arab working here would be considered as foreigner. [passage omitted]

Regarding socialism, brothers, things are currently not right. You have now 5,000 bogus cooperatives. Do not undermine the cooperative movement for us like the socialism that is said to have fallen in eastern Europe. It was not socialism that had fallen, rather it was bogus socialism. You here are falsifying socialism. When 50, 10, five, or 100 Libyans get together into an association then one can speak of a cooperative. But when one person presents a bogus list of fifty Libyans who have other jobs and speaks about a cooperative, then no. This would not be a cooperative but a holding company. [passage omitted]

National service functions, even as road sweepers, should be carried out by people of a certain age and a certain level of education in the framework of national service lasting for a year without being paid or by being rewarded, an allowance, no more. After this, everybody goes back to his work while others would take over from you. This is national service. [passage omitted].

The $500 million we were supposed to distribute last year, and we did not, to the 100,000 families, is an issue the secretariat of the General People's Congress brought before the people's tribunal in order to answer the secretariat of the General People's committee before the people's tribunal on what happened to the 500 million, how it had been spent. It is missing because they have been spent within the budget. Why did they spend it in the budget? Last year, we wanted 100,000 families to receive $5000 a year. This year, we are supposed to add an extra 100,000 families. The following year, we will add another 100,000 families, and we go on increasing it to 200,000 families, 300,000, 400,000, 500,000 until the oil revenues are distributed among families in full. It is clearly stipulated in the report of the social security fund that one can claim the 5000 to spend it. If you are wise, the money would be released for you to use, but if they see that you are going to spend it unwisely then the money would still be yours but it would not be released for you to use. This is the way it should work.

The next phases of the great man-made river should be executed by Libyans. I can see you saving 5 billion in foreign currency [unit not specified]. [passage omitted]

It will cost you 5 billion in foreign currency, unless you build it yourselves. That will not be a problem. It would be possible for us to train on driving trucks, digging, and manufacturing pipes. There are two factories in Libya; one in (Sirir) and the other in Burayqah which manufacture the enormous pipes. [passage omitted]

The people, the people's congresses have made important decisions on security. The people's committees for justice will adopt measures to implement these decisions, which must be made known to everyone. They must not be surprised by them or [words indistinct]. You must be told that such and such has been done in implementation of your decisions.

Areas may be put under siege, someone may be executed, another may have his hand and foot cut off; these would be in implementation of the law you have passed. [passage omitted]

A people's guard will be established in every commune to carry out the duty of people's local security. Like the

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police, they will have judicial control authority. This will be the responsibility of every commune. People may not have known what to do if we did not have a plan and matters had not been clear. However, matters are very clear and the system is brilliant.

Who has a rifle, who has a gun and who shoots everyday... [pauses]. Where from? This is death. Who gave you death? Who permitted you death? One is drinking alcohol. One is having dollars. One is having drugs. One is holding a gun, a rifle. This is danger. Who gave it to you? Who allowed you to have it? These are very dangerous things. This is death. [applause] You dare to shoot in a street full of inhabitants. Come! Come! Who manufactured it? Who gave it to you? Where is the signature? From where did you obtain the ammunition? Who allowed you to shoot in this place? This person may be killed at the same place. We would have killed all the corrupt ones in one, two, or three years. Good riddance. [Words indistinct] of God who kill people in scores. Islam permits one third for the remaining two thirds. So you kill one out of every three.

When an area... [pauses] This you have decided. So take care of it as it had not been explained at the General People's Congress. An area commits a collective crime, a collective mistake, you, as a popular leadership, are responsible in the first place for implementing the punishment on this area.

We want Libya to be safe and loving. Libyans are brothers, from the same family, and from the same origin. Disputes which are not individual, if it is an individual dispute the police, public prosecution and someone will deal with it. But when an area makes a mistake and becomes foolish... [pauses]. No, no, the collective mind of this popular leadership decides what it sees fit for it. We can for example, this is an example you all know. We will not (?argue) about it.

In Hun [a village southeast of Tripoli] a terrible collective thing happened. Hun's inhabitants fought each other with bullets, fires, and killing for trivial reasons. We do not know the first reason for it — something social or trivial. But it led to enormous losses, to an incredible childish thing. The popular leadership in Libya does not allow such a thing. The popular leadership says this area is punished by this and this and this because it has committed such a thing. We do not allow Libyans to kill each other in such a way.

You can cut off from us fuel, electricity. The standing order states that you can suggest any measures you see necessary and adequate including deprivation from the great man-made river's water. You can shut the opening if you have created a problem. You have not installed a leadership. You have made no appointment. The area which has not appointed its people's committees suffers suspension of salaries, water supply, electricity supply, telephone service, and everything else because it has no people's authority we can communicate with. The electricity company says that there must be a person to represent the electricity company in this commune to communicate with. If you have not appointed someone, let the electricity supply be cut off. [passage omitted]

Any area that experiences failure, differences, or conflict over appointments would have obstructed itself. Salaries will not be paid, because for salaries to be paid a representative from the commune has to be a member of the people's con aittee for the treasury. They would say you did not appoint a member to the treasury. Therefore, the treasury cannot deal with this commune. [passage omitted]

I will tell you that the state of women in Libya is unacceptable. For your information, there will be a meeting this month on women's activities.

Women should draft laws and say that those are laws which we would like in a free state — a jamahiri society, a society of men and women and a society that is free of slavery. [indistinct shouts from unidentified voice in the crowd] You are right.

Despite the laws, the Koran — the law of the society — and despite the laws which you have issued, the humiliation, oppression, degradation, neglect, treading on women is still continuing. She could be divorced at any time. You can have many wives at any time, and take the children and the house. This does not make sense. We are talking about a human being. It might make sense if we were talking about wood or an inanimate object, but we are talking about a woman, a human being, and a human being must not be humiliated to the extent a woman is humiliated.

Expurgation committees will reassess all divorce and marriage cases. Ninety percent of them might become null and void, and we may all have to appear before courts. Courts will have to make us accountable for our violations of the law. You cannot get married or divorced outside the law. We cannot have a drunkard divorcing his wife and throwing his children out. Divorce will have to be either by mutual agreement or decided by the court. Marriage will have to be by mutual agreement or decided by the court.

The current state of affairs of women serving, bringing up children, cleaning the house, and cooking food cannot be tolerated. An afreet [demon] cannot do such things. A robot cannot do such things. This was long, long, ago in the backward age. Now it does not hold. Now they run public restaurants. They make

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it a condition that below each building they build a restaurant in which all families of the building take part. Some cook the food, and these families take part and that is it. Who told you that the woman is the one to cook? You go cook. [applause]. The woman who gave birth to you and brought you up is holy. She must be respected. [passage omitted]

The woman makes you. She is like my little god for you. She made you. She is holy. She has some godhood and divinity. How could you despise her? What are these cases of divorce and marriage in existence? It is unbelievable. Go visit the social security department and see those shameful cases. This is a jamahiri [mass] society, a society of men and women, a society of freedom. No, this cannot be. Anyway, women will meet. Unmarried, married, divorced women, and widows — each group will draft the law that suits it and the law will become effective in the Jamahiriyah.

We are in an excellent state. So far, Libya remains the cheapest country in the whole world. Go and have a look in the world and see the price of food, clothes, and goods, whatever they may be. Libya is the cheapest country in the world — you can conduct a scientific study and see for yourselves.

Libya has excellent revenues; it has oil, gas, water which it has extracted from the heart of the desert, the sea, and enormous tourism potential that equals oil. However, it needs a people who would confront challenges, appreciate their responsibilities, and plot their future path. [passage omitted]

Libya: Al-Qadhdhafi Interviewed on Italian Politics

BR0103144196 Milan CORRIERE DELLA SERA in Italian 1 Mar 96 p 6

[Report by Antonio Ferrari on interview with Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi by unidentified correspondents in Surt; date not given: "Italy, Follow Me, I Will Be Your Colonel"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Surt — Fellow Italian citizens, read this and take courage. It does not matter if you have already decided who to vote for 21 April, or if you are troubled by doubts. A new figure has emerged in our election campaign. Exotic, very famous, definitely unexpected, and almost certainly undesired.

The shadow of Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi has fallen across in the arena, between [Olive Tree coalition leader] Prodi and [Forza Italia Chairman] Berlusconi, [National Alliance Chairman] Fini and D'Alema [Democratic Party of the Left secretary]. Recently, instead of concerning himself with the embargo, Lockerbie, or the recent American charges of having constructed the largest underground chemical weapons factory in the world, he has had one sole concern — what will happen to Italy, and what can be done to help it.

The colonel, who demands daily and highly detailed reports from his embassy in Rome on what is happening in our country, fears the following, in order: a military coup d'etat, the return of Fascism, civil war, and secession. He is paying very close attention to politics, but also to our economy (Tripoli is about to conclude a gigantic contract with ENI [National Hydrocarbons Agency] for the exploitation of Libyan gas — a deal worth over $3 billion, which is causing our allies irritation). Al-Qadhdhafi, the apostle of confusion, flirts with [Northern League Secretary] Bossi, but then says that he is "very worried about our stability".

Basically, despite the barrage of blandishments and insults, according to whispers from the colonel's aides, Libya has a priority objective: It wants Italy to treat it as France treats Algeria. Ready to defend it in all forums, against anything and anyone. Perhaps this is why al-Qadhdhafi is making repeated affirmations of his respect for France's President Chirac. He praised him for defying Washington over its nuclear tests. He praised him when he suspended them.

Italy, however, is weak; "there is too much chaos", according to the Mediterranean's foremost prophet of doom. He has a solution, though: "No more parties, parliament, or armed forces. You too should form a Jamahiriyah, that is, a government of the masses. If you do so, we will be bound together forever."

The Libyan leader invited four reporters [from CORRIERE DELLA SERA, LA REPUBBLICA, IL MESSAGGERO, IL GIORNALE] to talk about Italy, and Italy alone, and said: "I promise that, after this interview has been published, I will satisfy all your curiosities". He was in a hurry to speak. His haste is inexplicable. It took 24 hours to reach Libya by air and then 1,600 km by car at crazy speed, and an immediate interview lasting over an hour. It was as if to say: Sorry about the haste, but it was necessary.

In his tent in the middle of the Surt [name as published] military compound, protected by batteries of antiaircraft missiles, he approached like some inspired messiah. Under his fawn double- breasted jacket, he wore a read sweater. He also sported Ray-Bans and python-skin slippers. His "office" was furnished in spartan fashion — a desk, a few chairs, an dozen mattresses, and a television set.

The ascetic colonel shook hands and said: "CORRIERE DELLA SERA? I think the other day you published

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something against us (a report on chemical weapons — CORRIERE DELLA SERA editor's note). Bring me the embassy's report." Then he immediately calmed down.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] Tell me, how are things in Italy?

[Correspondent] Fine, Colonel, soon we will be having an election.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] You are always having elections.

[Correspondent] But as you will know, Italy has had its own little revolution.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] You need a great revolution, not a little one.

[Correspondent] Do you have any advice?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] This is the very reason why I invited you here. [Al-Qadhdhafi ends]

With solemn tread, he took up position behind his desk. He said repeatedly: "I will not answer any other questions. They would take us away from the essential point." That is, Italy.

He launched into a lengthy ideological-cum-ethical lecture on our country's problems. "Yes, because what is happening to you is the practical explanation of the substance of my Green Book. So I advise the Italian people to read it carefully." He proceeded with a detailed analysis of the mechanism of the Jamahiriyah, of its successes, and of its tested guarantee of happiness. Actually, we did not seem to see any such happiness on the faces of the Libyans we encountered.

"The problem," he said — and you would swear that he really believes it — "can be summed up as a conflict of powers. In the twenties in Italy this conflict prevented the parties from forming a government. The political struggle produced a vacuum, and Mussolini filled that gap with his gangs and his march on Rome. The result was the establishment of Fascism. Now I see that those conditions are being created again."

[Correspondent] Is there any specific reason for this?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] No, it is the overall situation that may encourage the resurgence of Fascism. I am worried about a military coup d'etat.

[Correspondent] Is this based on information or impressions?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] I am simply saying that the conditions exist which point to such a development as a possibility.

[Correspondent] Do you seriously think that there could be a coup d'etat in our country, which has belonged to NATO for the past 50 years? The allies would not allow it.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] The alliance cannot prevent a decision which would be Italy's alone. [Al-Qadhdhafi ends]

It would have been ridiculous, had it not been for the haste of the invitation and the solemn manner in which the leader made his pronouncements.

[Al-Qadhdhafi continues] But beware: The parties, which are reactionary and decadent, are disintegrating. They say that they have won when they have less than 25 percent of the votes, as happened in Turkey. It is ridiculous and crazy for minority parties to govern as though they commanded a majority. People are tired, and the only solution is a government by the masses. With this, Italy would enjoy stability. Consider: Our similarity would bring us eternal peace. Then there would be no need for minority conscription. Look at us. We have 2 million independent armed Libyans, in combat readiness. There must be an end to armies of a few thousand men. [Al-Qadhdhafi ends]

Otherwise there will be chaos.

[Al-Qadhdhafi continues] Sicily wants independence, and the Sicilians have Arab origins. Too often they have been considered second-class citizens and treated like garbage. In the North too there is a desire for secession, and they are putting forward ideas of autonomy that are close to those of our own Jamahiriyah.

[Correspondent] Does that mean that you agree with Bossi, Colonel?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] Actually I am not quite clear about how the situation stands, but I believe that the League is not clear about it either. I think that they would do well to read the Green Book. [Al-Qadhdhafi ends]

Could there be a definite link between the leader's initiative and the multi-billion dollar contract with ENI, which would transform Libya into a power within the international gas market, too?

[Correspondent] Tell us, Colonel, are you seeking a political offset?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] We will talk about that next time. Of course, if the chaos continues, with the risk of a coup d'etat, fascism, and civil war, I think it is unlikely that bilateral relations with Italy can be developed.

[Correspondent] But the political situation that may emerge from the Italian election could also bring new stability. Will you acknowledge that?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] If that happens, I could contribute [partecipare] in the future. We could found three parties — one for the Libyan Jews who left in 1967, one for the children of Libyan deportees, and one for the Italians who were expelled from Libya.

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[Correspondent] In which area would you place yourself, M. al-Qadhdhafi? With Berlusconi's Freedom Pole, with Prodi's Olive Tree, or perhaps with [Life Senator] Andreotti.?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] You are referring to friends of mine. But I am thinking about a government of the masses. And maybe some day, perhaps in the year 2000, when there is a Jamahiriyah in Italy, I will be your leader. [Al-Qadhdhafi ends]

Al-Qadhdhafi had the relaxed smile of someone who has issued a precise message that perhaps someone will be able to decipher. He got up as though to say: Off you go and publish this. He took his leave with a: "Thank you; see you soon."

Gas: Contract of the Century

Some people have described it as "one of the contracts of the century". Talks on it have been going on for years, but now it is reaching the final stages. Tripoli is about to sign an agreement with the ENI's [National Hydrocarbons Agency] AGIP [Italian National Oil Company] for the extraction and export of Libyan gas. The news, which was picked up in Cyprus the other day by MIDDLE EASTERN ECONOMIC SURVEY, has been reported all round the world, prompting responses from those who fear a lessening of the effects of the embargo imposed on Tripoli for its failure to hand over two citizens suspected of involvement in the Lockerbie disaster (the attack on an aircraft in the skies above Scotland in 1988, in which 270 people died) and from those who wish they were in AGIP's position. It is indeed a historic contract. No less than 8 million cubic meters of gas a year (about one-third of the world's output) would enter the market from two platforms. The deal is worth $3 billion, and would place Libya among the gas producing powers, together with Algeria and Russia. But behind the scenes of this major deal, there are apparently also strong pressures to secure political offsets. Tripoli wants Italy to become its attorney and to support its cause in all international forums. "We felt confident with Andreotti and Craxi, but also with Berlusconi. Now we are much less so," the colonel's aides said.

Arab Powers Sponsor Terrorism, But Business With Rome Is Excellent

So what if Tripoli is accused of constructing a chemical weapons factory? AGIP plans to import 8 million cubic meters of gas (we currently purchase a total of 34 million cubic meters abroad) from Tripoli's reserves soon (we are on the home straight). So what if the massacre of members of the rais' family continues in Saddam Husayn's Iraq? An Italian Foreign Ministry delegation is in Baghdad at the moment to examine the possibility of opening a commercial interests section at the Hungarian Embassy (diplomatic relations do not exist between our country and Iraq). And what about Iran, which the United States says is aiming to produce its own nuclear bombs? It has risen to third place on the list of countries from which Italy imports oil.

Lands of evil. Centers of international terrorism. But first and foremost trade partners offering huge potential. Despite all the controversies, Libya, Iran, and Iraq are among the leading objectives of Italy's economy and diplomacy. "It might even be too late," according to Antonio Loche, secretary general of the Italian Asia Institute, an organization that promotes business with Iraq. "For instance, Baghdad is seeking a solution to the embargo: On 11 March Saddam will resume negotiations with the United Nations to secure permission to sell oil in exchange for food and medical supplies. And thus to extricate himself from his isolation. If he succeeds, however, Italy will find itself in line, behind several other countries, such as Germany, which is already in contact with Baghdad."

In Iraq Italian firms could accumulate a volume of business worth 2-3 trillion lire [L] in a year (before the war the total was worth some L5 trillion). This is merely an estimate, of course. But it is a significant one. At the moment a delegation comprising six director generals of Iraqi ministries (from Industry to Trade) is visiting Italy, meeting with our businessmen. Some of them have apparently already drawn up draft contracts. Moreover, the team from Baghdad met in the lower house with a large group of highly interested members of parliament.

In the absence of diplomatic relations, the Foreign Ministry has stood aloof: "The Iraqi mission is a private one." But at the same time the Foreign Ministry has sent to Baghdad a delegation headed by Middle East Bureau chief Diego Brasioli, with the job of examining how to open an office to take care of Italian interests.

On the Iranian front, our diplomacy is even more exposed. In April Italy, as duty president of the EU, will host delegations of the EU, the United States, and Canada, which will meet to establish a common approach in Western policy on Tehran. Furthermore, with an explosive increase of 58.7 percent in the past 11 months, according to the oil union's latest figures, Iran has become Italy's third largest supplier of crude (with 15.7 percent of the total, after Libya's 30.1 percent and the former USSR's 16.3 percent). Just behind Libya, therefore, which remains a special partner for Italy. It is ready to intensify ties still further. The ENI agreement on Libyan gas is apparently on the point of becoming operational. This means that soon 25 percent of Italy's gas imports could come from Colonel al-Qadhdhafi.

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Morocco

Morocco: Iraq's Ramadan Seeks To Reassure After Husayn Kamil Slaying

MM0503151396 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 5 Mar 96 pp 1, 4

[Report by Hatim Butaywi: "Ramadan in Rabat To Rectify Relations With Opposition Parties"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Rabat — Informed sources in Rabat expect the current visit to Morocco by Iraqi Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan — in the framework of a tour of the Arab Maghreb states — to be an opportunity to neutralize the shift that has taken place in Moroccan political parties and organizations since the assassination of Iraqi defector General Husayn Kamil.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that Ramadan will meet with leaders of some Moroccan opposition parties that supported Iraq during the second Gulf war and which expressed their indignation at the way Husayn Kamil was eliminated.

As is known, the Moroccan Human Rights Organization, which includes all the opposition and other parties, strongly condemned the elimination of Husayn Kamil and members of his family, describing his murder as "a horror show." The organization said that Iraq needs to establish a democratic state in which human dignity is protected.

Ramadan's mission in Rabat will be difficult owing to the radical shift in the Moroccans' view of the policy pursued by Iraq on human rights. [passage omitted]

Sudan

Sudan: Paper Says Egypt 'Provoking' Sudanese in Disputed Hala'ib

EA0503090396 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1730 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The SUDAN AL-HADITH newspaper today, reports that the Egyptian authorities have continued their provocative actions and harassment of Sudanese citizens trapped in the occupied Hala'ib.

The report went on to say that the Egyptian regime had carried out firing exercises in the area, with the aim of terrorizing citizens and provoking the Sudanese military unit deployed there.

These acts of provocation, the report maintained, were part of the continuous mistreatment by the Egyptian authorities against Sudanese citizens in Hala'ib, which included open armed aggression against Shalatayn and Abu-Ramad police outposts, the (?arrest) of some policemen and preventing water supplies and health services from reaching the area.

A responsible source said the Sudanese army unit in the area was firmly defending every inch of the motherland.

Sudan: Armed Forces Command Summons Egyptian Military Attache

EA0503160496 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Armed Forces Command today summoned the Egyptian military attache in Khartoum and informed him of the seriousness of what was happening in the Hala'ib triangle.

Egyptian forces there have been shelling the Sudanese forces in Hala'ib to pave the way for a military intervention aimed at occupying the Hala'ib region.

The general command protested against this behaviour which obliges the armed forces to enter into an armed conflict.

Reports from THE SUDANESE NEWS AGENCY, SUNA, say that the last few days have witnessed large scale movement and intense activity by Egyptian forces there. The firing of weapons, including artillery shells of different calibres has been heard. This is considered as the greatest escalation in the triangle and a threat to regional security.

Tunisia

Tunisia: Ben Ali Receives Iraqi Vice President Ramadan

JN0503125396 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1215 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tunis, 5 Mar (INA) — Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali today received Taha Yasin Ramadan, Iraqi vice president and personal envoy of President Saddam Husayn.

In a statement to INA in Tunis, Ramadan said he conveyed President Saddam Husayn's greetings to his brother, Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, as well as his wishes for progress and prosperity for the fraternal Tunisian people. The vice president added that he conveyed an oral message to the Tunisian president from his brother, President Saddam Husayn, on the latest developments between Iraq and the UN Special Commission regarding Iraq's implementation of Resolution 687. The vice president noted that the Security Council should fulfill its obligations toward Paragraph 22 of this resolution, since Iraq has fulfilled its commitments.

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President Saddam Husayn's personal envoy added that he briefed the Tunisian president on Iraq's full cooperation with the UN delegation in the ongoing dialogue on oil for food, medicine, and other basic needs of the Iraqi people, noting Iraq's eagerness to make the dialogue succeed.

The vice president said he discussed prospects for cooperation between the two fraternal countries and the desire to promote these relations to serve joint interests. Ramadan added that the Tunisian president showed full understanding of Iraq's position and the suffering of its people, asserting Tunisia's stand that calls for a complete lifting of the blockade. The Tunisian president said his country is willing to make efforts with the concerned states toward this end and to contribute toward easing the suffering of the Iraqis.

Ramadan added that the Tunisian president asked him to convey his greetings to President Saddam Husayn and the Iraqi people. The Tunisian president said he is optimistic that the Iraqi people will overcome their ordeal.

The meeting was attended by Tunisian Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahia and Iraq's ambassador to Tunisia.

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Kuwait

Kuwait: Ministry Source Condemns 'Terrorist Actions' in Israel

LD0503143596 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1159 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kuwait, 5 Mar (KUNA) — An official source at the Foreign Ministry said that the State of Kuwait followed with regret and pain the terrorist actions that took place in Israel recently and claimed the lives of many innocent people.

He said that while condemning these terrorist operations, which aimed at undermining security and stability in the region and impeding the peace process, the State of Kuwait hopes that the efforts to boost the process of just and comprehensive peace will continue so that the countries and peoples of the region can enjoy security, stability, and prosperity.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: CDLR Announces Dismissal of Spokesman al-Mas'ari

MM0603094096 London CDLR MONITOR in Arabic 5 Mar 96

[Communique No. 44 issued by the CDLR: "Al-Faqih Assigned Official Spokesman Duties"; received by fax 6 March]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights [CDLR] has decided to dismiss Dr. [Muhammad] al-Mas'ari as official spokesman. The Committee is not responsible for any statement or action by al-Mas'ari.

The Committee has also decided to assign Dr. Sa'd al-Faqih, director of its office in London, to perform the duties of official spokesman and to regard him as the sole individual authorized to represent the Committee.

God willing, the Committee will later publish the background to and justification for this decision. The Committee stresses that all its activities will continue without any interruption, unaffected by al-Mas'ari's absence. And the weekly bulletins, the monthly magazine, nonperiodical reports, and other programs will continue to be issued regularly.

Furthermore, no change has occurred in the methods of communication with the Committee: fax, telephone, electronic and ordinary mail.

We pray to God to help everyone to do what satisfies Him.

[Dated] London: Tuesday 16 Shawwal 1416 H corresponding to 5 March 1996

Saudi Arabia: CLDR Protagonists Trade Accusations

MM0603112696 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 6 Mar 96 pp 1, 4

[Report by 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Khamis and Alan George: "Saudi Dissidents Split"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] London — London witnessed yesterday a dramatic episode inside the so-called "Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights" [CDLR] in Saudi Arabia, in the form of a split inside the Committee and an exchange of accusations that assumed a personal nature. Meanwhile, informed British sources have announced that London has banned Usamah Bin-Ladin, [Saudi businessman accused of financing terrorism] who lives in Sudan, and refused to grant him an entry visa to Britain.

A statement issued yesterday by [CDLR Official Spokesman Muhammad] al-Mas'ari pointed out that the Committee had dismissed [Dr. Sa'd] al-Faqih [director of the CDLR office in London] because of his refusal to implement some of its orders and his insistence on employing some people who, according to the statement, "have suspect links with British and other organs."

Al-Mas'ari's statement pointed out that the disagreements inside the Committee with Dr. al-Faqih are 18 months old. The statement said that "the Committee has over 18 months tried to overcome the difficult disagreements with Dr. Sa'd Bin-Rashid al-Faqih, so it gave him a free hand to run all administrative and financial matters, putting the Committee's movable and nonmovable property in his disposal, and it appointed him as head of its magazine [AL- SHAR'IYAH]." The statement said that the Committee did so to "quench his (that is, Dr. al-Faqih's) thirst for domination, hegemony, and extreme dislike for shura [consultation] and the exchange of views, and also out of the desire not to arouse his emotional reactions or provoke him."

The statement added: "Most regrettably, Dr. Sa'd al-Faqih has resorted to all-out confrontation over the past few days. He changed all the locks to the office, giving the new keys to some administrative staff not the persons signing below (that is, on the statement). They are al-Mas'ari, Kassab 'Abd-al-Rahman, and Walid 'Abd-al-Rahman Ghanim."

The statement criticized al-Faqih for attacking the honor of [CDLR] members and their families, talking ill of them in private meetings, and refusing to spend on CDLR members with the intention of twisting their arms and exerting pressure on them under the pretext of protecting the Committee's funds. [passage omitted]

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For his part, Sa'd al-Faqih has said that al-Mas'ari's accusations are ridiculous and that the Committee, whose office is run by al-Faqih, decided to dismiss al-Mas'ari but postponed its decision until the court issues its verdict vis-a-vis al-Mas'ari's deportation from Britain.

Al-Faqih pointed out that the accusations are unacceptable and that it is he, not al-Mas'ari, who is running the Committee. Anyone who contacts the Committee will find out who is in charge, he said.

Al-Faqih says that al-Mas'ari was not a member of the Committee, but its official spokesman. He pointed out that he has reservations about al-Mas'ari's contacts with others without consulting members of the Committee.

Al-Faqih described the statement issued by al-Mas'ari as "an attempt to preempt a decision by the Committee against him," and that al-Mas'ari's problem is with the Committee, not al-Faqih.

Al-Faqih added that al-Mas'ari tried to preempt the Committee's decision by issuing a statement when he felt that the decision to dismiss him was about to be issued.

Commenting on some people's description of what has happened as a split inside the Committee, he said: "We do not want to comment on what has happened. People can describe it any way they like."

On his refusal to spend [al-sarf 'ala] on members of the Committee, he said: "The accusations do not deserve a reply."

On al-Mas'ari's accusations that he attacked his colleagues and families, al-Faqih said: "Those who deal with me know my morals, and I am above suspicion."

He pointed out that he has been appointed spokesman for the Committee in place of al-Mas'ari. He said: "Al-Mas'ari's ridiculous allegations, namely that I locked the door and changed the keys, will not affect me."

Al-Faqih admitted that other problems will take place in the future. He said: "I pray to God to send us someone better than al-Mas'ari."

Asked whether al-Mas'ari will operate in the Committee's name in the future and whether that would conflict with al-Faqih's orientations, the latter said: "British law allows al-Mas'ari to speak and take action in the Committee's name. Our name [the CDLR] will continue until we receive instructions from inside [the country]."

Asked whether al-Mas'ari has opened his own office, al-Faqih said: "I do not know whether he has set up another office. We will continue to work on the basis of the policies we have drawn up." [passage omitted]

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Iraq: Al-Sahhaf—Agreement Sought With UN 'Temporary Arrangement'

JN0603083196 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2150 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 5 Mar (INA)—Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf said that the Iraqi delegation, led by Ambassador 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari, will leave for UN headquarters in New York within the next few days to resume negotiations on oil-for-basic humanitarian needs. The talks with the UN General Secretariat delegation are expected to begin on 11 March.

In a statement to INA, the foreign minister said: During the second round of negotiations, the Iraqi delegation will work with the same objective and businesslike spirit and expertise with which it worked during the first round. We hope that the two sides will make further progress on accomplishing their task.

He added: At the same time we follow up the development of negotiations with the UN General Secretariat, and welcome progress in this regard, we say that Iraq's major efforts will continue to call on the UN Security Council to fulfill its obligations toward Iraq. This basically can be achieved by the implementation of Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687.

The foreign minister said: Iraq's implementation of all the essential and detailed requirements enshrined in Paragraph 22 has become very clear. No one can deny this any more. It is no longer possible for anyone to find pretexts to postpone the implementation of Paragraph 22 and the lifting of the economic blockade imposed on Iraq.

He added: Iraq has cooperated fully with the UN Special Commission, and provided it with detailed information and answers to all its questions and queries. It will continue to cooperate. Therefore, we hope that the UN Special Commission will make the conclusions to close the file of the requirements of the implementation of Paragraph 22, and consequently lift the economic blockade which has been imposed on Iraq for more than five years.

Concluding his statement, the foreign minister said: Reaching an agreement between Iraq and the UN General Secretariat to export quantities of Iraq's oil to purchase basic humanitarian needs is a temporary arrangement we seek. We are also eager to double efforts and work tirelessly so that the UN Special Commission will finish its work and submit its report to the UN Security Council to implement Paragraph 22 and lift the economic blockade imposed on Iraq.

Iraq: Airspace 'Violation' Protest Lodged With UN Chief

JN0603084596 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0750 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] New York, 6 Mar (INA)—Iraq sent a memorandum of protest to the UN secretary general on the violation of its airspace by U.S., British, and French aircraft for purposes of surveillance and provocation.

In his memorandum yesterday, Iraq's permanent representative to the United Nations said that the aforementioned aircraft violated Iraq's airspace during the period 16-29 February by carrying out 813 hostile sorties.

In his memorandum, Iraq's permanent representative called for interceding with these states to stop these acts which threaten Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity, terrify civilians, and inflict material losses on private and public property. He said these acts are flagrant violations of the UN Charter and the provisions of international law. He also called for confirming Iraq's right to legal compensations for the harm inflicted on its people.

Iraq: Israelis Reportedly Visit Baghdad To Strike Trade Deals

TA0503184696 Ramallah AL-BILAD in Arabic 3 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Muhammad Farhan]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, AL-BILAD — Citing officials in the Iraqi Interior Ministry, informed sources have disclosed that a number of Israeli businessmen visited Baghdad during the last three months. The sources said that the visits apparently aim at concluding commercial deals with influential persons on the import of foodstuffs. The Israeli businessmen visited Baghdad with non-Israeli passports and were immediately taken to an unknown location far from Baghdad's famous hotels.

Iraq: 'Clarification' on Opposition Call to Syria To Open Border

MM0503143696 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 2 Mar 96 p 4

[Unattributed report: "Clarification From al-Samara'i"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London, AL-HAYAH — The former director of Iraqi military intelligence, Staff Major General Wafiq al-Samara'i, has denied asking Syria to open its borders with Iraq. AL-HAYAH has received the following clarification from al-Samara'i:

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"I would like to comment on reports published in AL-HAYAH 29 February 1996 to the effect that I asked that the Syrian-Iraqi border be opened, and wish to make the following clarifications:

"1. I did not make any request to that effect. The issue was not as reported, but rather a discussion of a proposal. (Syrian Vice President) 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam was very cautious and aware of the implications of lifting restrictions on movement across the border in any way. We respect and appreciate the option that Syria sees appropriate and believe that it will continue to support the Iraqi people. Moreover, we will not accept any responsibility for the potential outcome of presenting such a proposal, however marginal. The suffering is not only limited to Iraqis inside Iraq but also extends to hundreds of thousands of displaced and destitute [Iraqi] people dying outside Iraq. The worst suffering is to be deprived of freedom. However, the lifting of some restrictions on movement across the borders might help the people.

"2. The vice president wanted to look into the situation and examine our position. We were very satisfied with his remarks and sensed that there was great interest in the Iraqi crisis. We remain convinced of the importance of the great role played by Syria.

"3. There is a serious intention to hold a meeting of (Iraqi) opposition forces. However, the second half of March is only a guess.

"4. Mish'an al-Juburi [opposition Homeland Party [Hizb al-Watan] leader] made the proposal with regard to opening the borders. This represents his own view."

Iraq: PUK Accuses Barzani of 'Collaborating' With Baghdad Regime

NC0503163696 Paris AFP in English 1432 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Dubai, March 5 (AFP) - The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) on Tuesday accused the head of a rival Kurdish group of collaborating with Iraqi President Saddam Husayn's government.

Mas'ud Barzani, head of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), held a "long" meeting with Oil Minister 'Amir Rashid who was travelling through Kurdish-held areas of northern Iraq to Turkey, the PUK said in a statement to AFP.

"This meeting was the culmination of coordination and secret meetings between Saddam Husayn's regime and the KDP for the past two years, and its treachery can no longer be hidden," it charged.

Rashid, who travelled via the border town of al-Khabur, arrived in Ankara on Tuesday to meet with Turkish leaders on reopening the Iraqi-Turkish oil pipeline which has been closed since sanctions were imposed in 1990.

Part of the pipelines crosses Kurdish-held northern Iraq.

It was the first time that such a high-ranking Iraqi official crossed areas of northern Iraq which Kurdish groups have controlled with allied support since shortly after Baghdad's defeat in the 1991 Gulf War.

"The KDP is shaking the hands of criminals of Saddam Husayn's regime while it refuses to begin a dialogue with the PUK to end the fratricidal fighting," the statement said.

Two years of fighting between the rival factions has divided northern Iraq into areas controlled by the PUK and KDP.

The Iraqi minister, who met Barzani near the town of Salah al Din, "was accompanied by military officials and members of the Iraqi intelligence services, as well as KDP members," the PUK said.

Sixty-nine officials, including intelligence officers and oil experts, arrived in Iraqi Kurdistan ahead of Rashid.

Iraq: Regime Forces Shell Khanaqin; Advancing Force Retreats

NC0503171296 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1500 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Iraqi regime forces stationed in [place name indistinct] shelled the plains adjacent to the villages of [name indistinct], Shaykh Zarib, and (Awai Gawrah) in [place name indistinct], Khanaqin District.

Reporting this, KURDISTAN NWAY newspaper said the dictatorial regime's forces advanced 3 km toward the area but retreated later to their original positions fearing a deterring confrontation with the Peshmerga heroes and residents of the area.

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Israel: Peres Vows To Be 'No Less Cruel' Than Hamas; House Sealed

TA0503124896 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1230 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres says today that the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] infrastructure is beginning to be damaged in the wake of the security forces' activities against the organization. According to Peres, the reference is to an ongoing and cruel war and Israel, as he put it, will be no less cruel than Hamas in this war.

At the moment, the Jerusalem police are sealing off the home of the No. 1 wanted man in the territories, Muhyi-al-Din Sharif, who is suspected of having participated in the planning of the latest attacks in Jerusalem and Ashqelon.

This morning, 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam, the Hamas military wing, issued a leaflet saying that it would comply with the political leadership's request to halt the suicide attacks in Israel.

Israel: U.S. Explosive-Detecting Equipment To Be Received 6 Mar

TA0503183896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A plane carrying sophisticated explosive- detecting equipment will arrive from the United States at dawn tomorrow. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that Prime Minister Shim'on Peres spoke with President Clinton on the telephone last night and asked, among other things, for advanced means to help Israel to combat suicide terror.

Israel: Peres—U.S. Shipment 'Concrete' Expression of Support

TA0603082096 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres has thanked U.S. President Bill Clinton and the American people for their help in the struggle against Islamic terror. Peres said that the advanced systems U.S. President Clinton sent to Israel aboard a special plane are a concrete and immediate expression of this help.

Israel: Shahal Welcomes U.S. 'Quick Response' to Equipment Request

TA0603082996 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 6 Mar 96

[Telephone interview with Israeli Public Security Minister Moshe Shahal by Ya'el Qovetz and Mikha Friedman; place not given — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Qovetz] Public Security Minister Moshe has just left Ben-Gurion Airport after receiving the U.S. plane that brought explosive-detecting equipment to Israel early this morning. Mr. Shahal, we have heard that Israel asked for this equipment a long time ago. Had we received it earlier, could it perhaps have prevented some of the latest attacks?

[Shahal] It is hard to answer that question. I can tell you that the police and the prime minister's counterterror adviser have been conducting staff work for the past few months with regard to equipment that can help us. Such systems have been tested both in the United States and in other places abroad. We are grateful to President Clinton for agreeing to the prime minister's request and sending the eight systems within 24 hours. They will provide additional means in our struggle against terrorism.

[Friedman] Minister Shahal, isn't this situation somewhat similar to the supply of the U.S. Patriot missiles during the Gulf war when, after lengthy deliberations, the missiles were supplied only to be exposed as being of limited value. Will this not cause us to harbor false illusions about having a solution?

[Shahal] Look, this question was indeed raised, but the answer is of a very practical and simple nature. Experts in the Israel Police — which is the body that has overall responsibility for demolition issues — examined the equipment in the United States. They are familiar with both its advantages and its limitations. The main limitation is that there is no single piece of equipment that can prevent terrorism. We believe that this equipment, however, will provide an additional and very significant tool for detecting explosives. This equipment, which is called in English Sniffer, actually sniffs explosives and is able to locate explosives carried on persons or hidden in vehicles, and it is more effective than other means.

[Qovetz] When will we receive the smaller and more portable detectors which can be positioned on buses?

[Shahal] Some of this equipment — small, portable detectors — was introduced into our service several months ago. Some of this equipment — including approximately 20 or more systems — will be stationary

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and some portable. This very expensive equipment is slated to check vehicles and will be positioned at the Erez checkpoint and perhaps at our seaports as well. This deployment was planned some time ago. I think that the security personnel — the police, the army, and the prime minister's adviser — deserve great credit for these timely preparations.

[Qovetz] Are there any additional advanced U.S. systems on the way to Israel?

[Shahal] Additional systems will arrive here. Within two days, a team will arrive to train our experts. I believe that additional equipment to the tune of tens of millions of dollars will arrive in Israel. Today's shipment is the first in a series of shipments.

Once again, on behalf of the Israeli Government, I want to express our gratitude to the American people and to President Clinton for their quick response to our request. I know that President Clinton demanded and made sure that the equipment would arrive within 24 hours.

[Friedman] Minister Shahal, would the presence of Netanyahu, Sharon, Eytan, Levi, Meridor, Begin, and their colleagues in the government improve your ability to cope with Islamic terrorism?

[Shahal] Look, I have already served in two such governments. I want to tell you that with regard to this issue, the presence of any particular individual would not change anything on the practical level.

[Friedman] Does this mean that the issue of an emergency national unity government should be removed from the agenda?

[Shahal] There is great value in national unity at this time, but this goes beyond the political-partisan issue. There would have been value in a broad government if it could agree on a common goal. The problem with previous unity governments was that each side pulled in a different direction. There is no point in a forced national unity government. I believe that there is a controversy that cannot be ignored here: We say that the solution with the Palestinians should be based on separation, because we do not want them among us. The Likud has an ideology of annexation; they want to annex 2.5 million Palestinians to Israel. I think these two concepts cannot be bridged. The issue here, therefore, is not whether to set up a national unity government in which the sides would act in different ways but whether a real agreement on joint goals can be reached. This is what should be clarified. If it appears that the Likud supports us — and, incidentally, before the attacks the Likud supported the Oslo accords — I will support broadening the government to the maximum, mainly in order to improve the national mood.

Israel: Sarid on Opposition To Harming 'Terrorist' Families

TA0503150796 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1140 GMT 5 Mar 96

[Interview with Israeli Environment Minister Yosi Sarid by Hayim Yavin in the Tel Aviv studio—live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Yavin] Mr. Sarid, what is your reaction to last night's cabinet resolutions, some of which I believe you did not support, and to today's IDF [Israel Defense Forces] activities in the territories?

[Sarid] We — me personally — are for taking every step against Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], Islamic Jihad, and other extremist organizations, no matter how grave. This is not the issue. I am against taking steps that might, eventually, harm us more than do us good, that might boomerang on us after a while. I feel we have a single obligation: To harm Hamas. Whatever harms Hamas is fine; steps that help Hamas are absolutely wrong, even if momentarily, for a short time, it feels like they do harm.

[Yavin] What moves would harm innocent people and not Hamas, or perhaps also Hamas? Sealing or demolishing homes? Inflicting collective measures?

[Sarid] Let me give you an example: What actually happens when a house is demolished? We already know that, we are experienced. We have demolished hundreds and thousands of homes. The next day or several hours later, Hamas people come to the site and rebuild the house. They build a house, make a name for themselves, and gain popularity. I believe this move will only bolster Hamas, not harm it. I want to hit Hamas in its soft underbelly, and not help it — directly or indirectly. The majority of the other means the government is employing are correct, and are being carried out as we speak.

[Yavin] How can you harm Hamas while avoiding harm to the innocent, as you see it?

[Sarid] It is very difficult but efforts will be made — which is not always possible — to avoid this as much as possible. After all, we want to isolate Hamas. We want to push it into a corner. If we hurt the many, including innocent ones, we are expanding the circle of support for Hamas which, of course, is a mistake. I cannot tell you that we have a laboratory in which we can seek the precise and appropriate measures and dosage. Still, as much as possible, even in very difficult days, we must maintain cool heads, the voice of reason, and restraint.

[Yavin] So in the cabinet session, you urged restraint and nothing other than counting of 'Arafat to do the job?

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[Sarid] This is not what I said, Mr. Yavin. I said the very opposite: We must take every step no matter how harsh. We must harm Hamas while concentrating our blows on its soft spots, but even when we want to make moves, we must not do things that could only harm us. Let me give you another example: They say that we should harm the family of every terrorist. But what if some members of that family, or even one, are for the peace process? Therefore, aiming for the family is not the right direction. I have a better and more effective definition of the people we should harm, if we want to fight Hamas: Anyone affiliated with or expressing support for Hamas or a specific terrorist should be punished.

[Yavin] Should we do it, or should we trust 'Arafat or the Palestinian Authority [PA]?

[Sarid] War is war, but the enemy should be well identified. As far as we are concerned, Hamas and Islamic Jihad are the enemy. Sometimes we make mistakes in the definition, or there are people who — for political, not real reasons — want to mark 'Arafat and the PA as our enemy. If we go to war and the identity of the enemy is not clear to us, we cannot fight. We have problems with the PA and even justifiable claims; we have justified demands on the PA, But even justifiable charges do not make the PA the enemy. The PA is the enemy of our enemy. True, it has not done enough, but it definitely did things that we could not have done ourselves. [passage omitted]

Israel: IDF Announces General Curfew, Stringent Measures in West Bank

TA0503173696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1550 GMT 5 Mar 96

[News conference held by Major General Ilan Biran, Central Command chief, at the Central Command headquarters in Jerusalem; broadcast in progress — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] ....We plan to wage an all-out war against Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP]. It is a long, arduous, complex, and intricate process, but we are determined to carry it through and to prevail.

We have reinforced our troops very significantly. To that end, we have discontinued training of all regular Central Command formations — the paratroops, the Armored Corps, and others — and they have been all injected into current security activities.

With your permission, I will give you the details of several measures we have taken, and later I will answer your questions.

Beginning yesterday, we carried out a series of arrests, in addition to previous arrests. We have sealed the houses of the suicide terrorists and their handlers, the objective being to demolish them eventually, which we will do. More arrests will be made and houses will be sealed tonight and tomorrow. Since interim injunctions have been filed, all the suicide terrorists' houses will be demolished after the High Court issues its ruling. First-proximity male relatives of the suicide terrorists have been and will be arrested. A closure and sanctions have been imposed on their villages.

I would like to stress: The family of every suicide terrorist and families of those who plan to be one should know in advance that their house will be demolished and those around them will be severely punished. We have deepened arrests of Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and PFLP activists. We detained dozens over the past two days; a total of 102 since last Sunday. We have imposed a curfew and arrested all the men in the villages of al-Fawwar and Burqa' yesterday and today. The suspects were taken from the male residents of the villages, who were assembled and sifted. We will do the same in every village and township we suspect of harboring terrorists, and we will do so without pity. If the Palestinians fail to vomit out the terrorists at once, they will pay a heavy, a very heavy, price.

As you know, we have imposed a curfew on all the townships, villages, and cities — a total of 465 places containing 1.2 million people. This means there can be no traffic from or to these places.

We are strengthening the dividing line. In practical terms, we have doubled the deployment and are currently carrying out engineering work that will block various routes which were broken open. This work will last many weeks, perhaps many months. This is being done in parallel with a very complex plan, using abundant resources, which will apply to all the checkpoints, if and when they are reopened.

In addition, I have issued a series of orders prohibiting the following. First of all, Israeli citizens are prohibited from transporting Palestinians to Israel in their vehicles. Another order prohibits the Dan and Egged bus companies from transporting Palestinians. This means real separation aimed at averting operations of the kind you have come to know.

Another order about to be issued will establish a dividing strip 2-3 km wide, depending on the area, at a length of some 350 km, stretching from the Gilbo'a Mountains to the vicinity of the Dead Sea. This will permit us to sort the population in that strip in such a way that only local residents and farmers of that location

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will be able to move about there. This order is about to be issued.

Soldiers responsible for security have been assigned to each and every bus. They will inspect every person boarding the bus, as well as his personal gear.

As you remember, we provided the Palestinian authorities with very detailed name list, on the basis of which they can detain the terrorists staying in their jurisdiction. We will not allow Gaza to produce leaders and war materiel, and we will not allow Judaea and Samaria suicide attackers to be part of the explosive system that is butchering us.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1605 GMT on 5 March carries Gil Litman's report on the news conference, adding: "Referring to the cooperation with the Palestinian Authority intelligence apparatus, Gen. Biran said it is adequate, but if the question is whether it is satisfactory, the answer is no."]

[A similar report by Uri Gordon on Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1610 GMT on 5 March adds: "Gen. Biran further announced the closure of academic institutions in the territories, which harbor terrorists and encourage sedition and terrorist setups. This category includes Islamic colleges in Abu-Dis and Hebron, as well as charity and youth societies in Hebron, which harbors a very strong Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and PFLP infrastructure."]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1700 GMT on 5 March adds that "the IDF [Israeli Defense Forces] today sealed a total of 11 houses belonging to suicide terrorists' families."]

Israel: IDF Raids Hamas Institutions in Hebron, Abu-Dis

TA0603055496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Security forces raided Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] institutions in Hebron and Abu-Dis last night. Four institutions in Hebron and two in Abu-Dis were closed under an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] order. A Qol Yisra'el reporter said Palestinian security forces arrested 13 Hamas and Islamic Jihad activists in Bethlehem.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0500 GMT on 6 Mar adds: "Colonel Gadi, commander of the Hebron brigade, says that in searches carried by the IDF in the Hamas institutions, large amounts of seditious materials were found. He said that no opposition to the operation was encountered and that the Palestinian Police have not interfered with the operation. He said that one of the institutions was only partially shut down; two orphanages operating in it were not closed."]

Israel: Biran Believes Bomber From Gaza, Rejects Hamas Cease-Fire

TA0603062596 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] The head of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] Central Command, Major General Ilan Biran, said last night that the Tel Aviv bomber probably came from Gaza, though it was unclear when and how he left the Strip. Our correspondent Alan Ben-'Ami reports:

[Begin recording] [Ben-'Ami] [passage omitted] As for the latest report of a cease-fire offer from the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam terrorists, Gen. Biran had this to say:

[Biran] It's not an army issue and terror is terror, and we should fight terror and not negotiate terror, full stop.

[Ben-'Ami] Gen. Biran said the army was now acting with greater force and facilities than in the past but subject to operating within the law. That is why homes are being sealed but not yet destroyed, he said, allowing time for appeals to be lodged. As to the controversial issue of evicting the families of suicide bombers from those homes, the head of Central Command said the family of every suicide bomber or potential bomber must know that they will face the destruction of their home and harsh punishment for everyone around:

[Biran] People should decide between alternatives, and if humanity among them disappeared or vanished, it's about time to take every step needed in order to save our people, full stop. That's the answer; no excuses and no alternatives. If you do know an alternative, please let me know.

[Ben-'Ami] The army has always said in the past that it had a free hand to counter terror, so what is new now, the general was asked. The answer, he said, was not that most of these measures had not been undertaken before but that this time they were being carried out with greater force, facilities, and aggressiveness.

[Biran] The situation is a new one, and we should deal with it like a new situation. Those acts that the prime minister declared — and I have mentioned the details — should be taken in order to stop the terror, and that's the war. I don't have any kind of excuse or explanation but only determination, and believe me: a real determination.

[Ben-'Ami] Israel is now engaged in a fight to the end against the Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and Popular Front

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terrorist organizations, said Gen. Biran. It is a long, complicated, and difficult process, he said, but we are truly determined to see it through and to complete the mission. [end recording]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0500 GMT on 6 March adds: "Colonel Moshe El'ad, head of the Liaison and Coordination Office in Judaea and Samaria, says there are initial signs that the Palestinian police in the region are fighting the centers of terrorism."]

Israel: Inner Cabinet Approves Counterterror Measures

TA0603113896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The inner cabinet has approved the measures worked out by the Supreme Counterterror Command in yesterday's session with the prime minister. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that among the decisions adopted are the continuation of wide-scale detentions of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists and the deportation of Hamas activists who were directly involved in dispatching suicide terrorists. It was stressed that these steps will be done in accordance with the law. The inner cabinet also approved the continuation of the closure and further implementation of the separation policy. Our political correspondent reports that the cabinet was briefed on the steps taken so far and, among other things, it was said that some 180 Hamas activists have been detained so far.

Israel: Foreign Ministry Spokesman Views Security Measures

LD0503215796 Paris France-2 Television Network in French 1900 GMT 5 Mar 96

[Interview with Dany Chek, Israeli Foreign Affairs Ministry spokesman, by Daniel Bilalian in Jerusalem — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Bilalian] Next to me I have Mr. Dany Chek, spokesman for the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Mr. Dany Chek, Shim'on Peres has, with the Israeli army, undertaken a certain number of measures: combing operations and arrests. It is significant, but do you think it is sufficient to solve the problem?

[Chek] It is too early to say. What is certain is that an effort has to be made. It must be made by all those who hold the peace process dear, whether they are Israelis or Palestinian, or moreover the Arab states around us, where there are distant activities of Islamist organizations who have committed these attacks in the last few days.

[Bilalian] Do you think, as it seems you have said, like the Palestinians, that these Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] extremists do not necessarily come from the Palestinian autonomous territories, or from Jerusalem, but from much further afield — some even raise the question of the role of Iran and even Syria in the last 48 hours here?

[Chek] There is no doubt about where they come from. The suicide bombers who came to Jerusalem and Tel Aviv came from the territories. However the network of these organizations — Hamas and the Islamic Jihad — leads elsewhere in this region and outside this region.

[Bilalian] Do you think in this case Israel might be tempted to take military action either against Syria or Iran? Do you think it could reach that stage?

[Chek] I think the first priority is to deal with what is happening in our country, near to us. This is the task of the Israeli security forces. This is also the task, responsibility, and undertaking of Yasir 'Arafat and his police.

[Bilalian] Today we have the feeling that the Israeli Government, the Palestinians, everyone has tried to remain calm. It is nevertheless a very difficult situation. We are walking on a tightrope. Are these anxious times?

[Chek] Yes, I think that it is worrying. I think that this country has experienced difficult times. It has a tough mentality which has experienced difficult times before. I am confident that we will overcome this period, but these are in fact very difficult days for us all.

[Bilalian] Thank you very much.

Israel: Peres Approves Deportations, Seeks Regional Meeting on Terror

TA0603065496 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 6 Mar 96 p 2

[Report on interview with Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres by Ben Kaspit in Jerusalem on 5 March]

[FBIS Translated Text] "We are not helpless. The defense establishment has gone to work. It arrested those who organized the Jerusalem and Ashqelon terrorist attacks, and I can say tonight that there have also been significant detentions of those who organized the Tel Aviv attack," Prime Minister Shim'on Peres told MA'ARIV last night.

The prime minister convened the heads of the defense establishment and several ministers last night to continue the deliberations on the terrorist problem. Those present included the head of the Mosad, Shin Bet head 'Ami Ayalon, Chief of Staff Amnon Shahaq, Major

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General Dani Yatom, and Ministers Ehud Baraq, David Liba'i, Moshe Shahal, and Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer. The main issue on the agenda was deportations. The prime minister refused to comment on this, but yesterday he approved the deportation of anybody necessary. The Shin Bet reached the conclusion that this is the best deterrence, and deterrence is what is most needed these days. In yesterday's discussions, it also became clear that no jurist will stand in the way of the antiterrorist supercommand if it decides to deport Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists and that nobody will dispute the legality of such a move.

Security elements last night assessed that the deportation of many Hamas activists can be expected within the next few days. The relatives of those involved in the terrorist attacks may also be deported.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 0600 GMT on 6 March carries a report by Udi Segal which adds that the defense establishment is in a quandary over the country to which the deportees should be sent. Segal says that "Jordan is no longer an option, and we do not want to send them to Lebanon to avoid increasing the number of terrorists there, but a place will be found."]

The day after the Tel Aviv attack, Peres admits: "I am sad. I cannot deny the pain, but I must go on. I cannot allow myself to be overcome by grief. I have a heavy responsibility to shoulder." The prime minister has gotten over the initial shock and has decided to return to fight against his bitter fate in the impossible reality in which he finds himself.

Peres discussed a new idea with President Clinton on Monday [4 March] night. If the prime minister's efforts succeed, an international antiterror conference will convene soon in one of the Middle East capitals, probably Cairo or Amman. The Egyptians and Jordanians are keen and are even pressing for it. Clinton announced that it will be under his auspices. It was decided that the Americans will be the producers of the project. The Russians and the EU will also be present. The Peres scenario: Mubarak; Husayn; representatives from Morocco, Tunisia, the Gulf states, the United States, Russia, Europe, and perhaps also Saudi Arabia sitting together in Cairo, united in the war against terrorism.

But in the meantime, terrorism is a fact. I asked the prime minister yesterday about the problem of intelligence and whether he is not frustrated by the army's inability "to produce the goods." Peres: "I am not frustrated; I am realistic. We have one IDF [Israel Defense Forces], one Shin Bet, one Intelligence Branch. I cannot demand the impossible from them. I cannot complain about anybody. They are wonderful people, the best. They all work hard around the clock. There are results. There is progress on the ground, and the system is functioning.

"For instance, it was decided to bolster the deployment in Jerusalem. Within hours, 1,000 soldiers arrived in the city. They are everywhere, at every transit stop. The feeling of security has grown. The closure will be total. Efforts are being made to make sure that the separation is effective. Everything is being done to prevent terrorism in our cities. We are sealing houses, carrying out detentions, imposing curfews, and doing everything we can, but there is no magic formula."

Over the past 24 hours, Palestinian Authority head Yasir 'Arafat has received endless messages, direct and indirect. "If you do not act immediately, you will find Ari'el Sharon and Refa'el Eytan in the Defense Ministry in Tel Aviv. We wonder how long you will last with them," he was told indirectly. 'Arafat is in distress. He is showing signs of panic. The prime minister's bureau hopes the panic will push 'Arafat to act.

Israel: Shin Bet Bolsters Security Around Peres

TA0603065796 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 6 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Yosi Levi]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Shin Bet has bolstered security around Prime Minister Shim'on Peres over the last few days.

Security was enhanced because of the fear that the anger and outrage felt by Israelis following the latest wave of terrorist attacks could serve as fertile ground for attempts against the prime minister's life.

Israel: Baraq—'Arafat Has 'Last Chance' To Deal With Terror

TA0503170496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1605 GMT 5 Mar 96

[Report by political correspondent Shlomo Raz from the Foreign Ministry — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Raz] After meeting Italian Foreign Minister Susanna Agnelli, Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq sent a warning to Yasir 'Arafat and rejected his remarks about alleged cooperation between extreme right-wing Israelis and extreme Palestinians.

[Baraq] This is such nonsense that does not even merit our reaction. The truth is that Chairman 'Arafat mentioned this in a conversation with me. I told him: We have our fanatics and we will deal with them; you have your own fanatics, and we must deal with

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them jointly. Both groups are problematic enough as they are. There is no point in you making up stories about a connection between them. In practice, those who kill innocent women and children are your terrorists, Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. We will act against them in every way, everywhere. In a way, this is 'Arafat's last chance to try and do this alone in the areas under his authority.

Israel: Shahal Issues Order Banning Orient House Convention

TA0603102996 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Jerusalem District Police will prevent the convention planned by Faysal al-Husayni at Orient House because it is aimed at denouncing the steps taken by the Israeli Government against the Palestinians, mainly in Jerusalem. Palestinian Council members who are residents of Jerusalem have also been invited to the convention, and Minister Moshe Shahal, fearing that their attendance would violate Israel's agreement with the Palestinians, issued an order banning the convention.

Israel: Anonymous Caller Informs Newsmen of Upcoming Terror Attacks

TA0503143896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1410 GMT 5 Mar 96

[Report by Yoni Ben-Menahem]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] In the past few hours several journalists, including myself, have received anonymous calls on our personal cellular phones, in which a man announced in Arabic that a terrorist attack would be carried out within 15 minutes or within one hour. He changed the time element of the warning in each call, apparently aiming to alarm and intimidate. I have personally received several such calls today.

Israel: More Hamas Attacks Expected in 'Next Few Days'; Demonstrations Held

TA0603084196 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 6 Mar 96 pp 1, 9

[Report by Raine Marcus]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Police and security services have received intelligence information that Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] is planning additional attacks in heavily populated areas in Israeli cities over the next few days, senior sources said yesterday.

According to the information, terrorists are planning a bus bombing. A wanted terrorist is suspected of planning to carry out the attacks.

Police nationwide have beefed up their forces to prevent any kind of attack.

Security services are also examining the possibility that the suicide bombers were assisted from inside Israel.

Senior police officers confirmed yesterday that the bomb the terrorist strapped to the upper part of his body and detonated at Dizengoff Center was the same type as those used in other bombings.

"The bomb, which weighed 15 kilos, was made of TNT and filled with broken nails, and was identical to the one used in the Ashqelon bombing," said an officer. "The others in Jerusalem had full nails in them."

Tel Aviv police chief Cmdr. Gabi Last said yesterday that the identity of the terrorist has not yet been confirmed. He said that contrary to reports, the bomber had not been in Tel Aviv over the past two days.

OC Central Command Maj. Gen. Ilan Biran told Channel 1 yesterday that "the (bomber in the) last attack, according to the best of our knowledge, came from Gaza and reached Dizengoff Street from there."

The blond-haired head found outside Bank Leumi definitely belonged to the terrorist, said Last, who added that no one had noticed the bomber beforehand.

He reiterated that if the terrorist had succeeded in entering the center, the blast would have claimed several hundred victims.

Meanwhile, 300 soldiers and 400 additional policemen were drafted to the greater Tel Aviv area yesterday, bringing to 1,637 the number of policemen patrolling the city in and around busy shopping malls, markets, at bus stops and other densely populated areas.

Police in Tel Aviv yesterday set up impromptu road blocks and checked suspicious drivers, cars and pedestrians. Soldiers were given a special briefing on how to identify and isolate a suspect, instructions on opening fire and other regulations.

"Our aim is to give the public the feeling of security," said Last. Security guards in hotels, movie theaters and other public places were briefed by police.

On Monday night, some 57 demonstrators were detained in violent protests around the city, with most being released on condition they stay away from future demonstrations. Four minors were remanded yesterday by Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court.

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One Giv'atayim man carrying a placard reading "Death to Peres" was arrested yesterday afternoon as he walked near the center, and Last stressed that he will be indicted today on charges of incitement and sedition in an expedited trial.

Last night around a thousand demonstrators flocked to Dizengoff Center. Fifteen who set fires, shouted anti-government slogans and refused to obey police orders were arrested, and police clashed sporadically with protesters.

However, Last stressed he did not wish to prevent demonstrations by the public who wanted to express suffering as long as such protesters did not run riot or turn violent.

While a hundred-strong demonstration outside Prime Minister Shim'on Peres's Ramat Aviv home on Monday night turned violent, with several arrests, around 200 supporters rallied in the street last night, this time to show solidarity with Peres.

"Peres — you are not alone," "Yes to peace — no to violence," banners read.

Meanwhile, 34 Arabs from the territories who were illegally in Israel turned themselves in to police soon after the Dizengoff bombing, fearing for their lives and of reprisal attacks.

In Netanya, the 56-year-old father of the terrorist who bombed the No. 18 bus in Jerusalem last Sunday was arrested at a bakery in the city. He was illegally employed there, and police handed him over to the GSS [General Security Services]. The bakery owner, 27- year-old Shay Natan, was also arrested, and in an expedited trial was indicted and sentenced to three months' imprisonment and three months community service.

Some 70 Arabs in Israel illegally were rounded up yesterday by Coastal Plain District police. Some 21 employers were also questioned and will be indicted today.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English at 0500 GMT on 6 March adds: "280 Palestinians working illegally in Jerusalem have been arrested and dozens of their employers charged. In Yafo, a restaurant owner was questioned after he was found to have employed six Jordanians and five Palestinians illegally."]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0500 GMT on 6 March adds: "Yesterday, Major General Gabi Ofir, commander of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] forces in Judaea and Samaria, ordered settlement leaders to make sure the settlers do not employ Palestinian workers in the settlements. He directed the settlers to act toward creating a separation between the Jewish settlers and the Palestinians.

["On the basis of Ofir's briefing, the settlers got the impression that the security forces are not waging a real war against terrorism and that many measures are merely of a cosmetic nature."]

Israel: Israeli Arab Detained for Transporting Dizengoff Bomber

TA0603121996 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Shin Bet and the police have detained an Israeli Arab suspected of having smuggled the suicide terrorist from the Gaza Strip to Dizengoff Street. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that the Israeli Arab admitted during his interrogation that he smuggled the terrorist in his truck in exchange for over $1,000. According to the man, he had no idea that he was dealing with a terrorist who was about to carry out an attack in Israel.

Israel: Tzomet Leader, Likud MK's Demand Peres Resignation

TA0503155796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tzomet leader Refa'el Eytan met with President 'Ezer Weizman this afternoon in the wake of Eytan's proposal to establish a national emergency government. The meeting was held at the president's request, and our party affairs correspondent Yaron Deqel reports that Knesset Member [MK] Eytan said at the meeting that in view of the situation, the prime minister should resign in order to give way for the establishment of a government capable of efficiently combating terror.

The president pointed out at the meeting that he is not planning to expedite any moves to change the composition of the government.

Several Likud MK's today demanded the prime minister's resignation, saying that the peace process he has been spearheading has failed, and furthermore, there has been a fiasco in the security sphere.

Peres reiterated today that he does not rule out the unity government idea.

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Israel: Arab Labor Party Figure Fears Election Defeat, Violence

NC0503113796 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 5 Mar 96

[Telephone interview with Israeli Deputy Health Minister Nawwaf Masalihah, in Jerusalem, by Fawzi al-Jundi in Cairo on 5 March—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-Jundi] Mr. Masalihah, yesterday's bombing in Tel Aviv occurred shortly after the Jerusalem bombing and the earlier bombings in Jerusalem and Ashqelon. Do you think that these bombing operations, if one may use this term, will succeed in killing off the peace process?

[Masalihah] I can tell you that these bombings have had a major and adverse effect on the peace process, particularly as the elections are near. Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] members are declaring that they do not want the Labor Party in power and that they do not approve of sober and reasonable Israelis and Palestinians. I believe that this will produce a bloodbath. This is my personal opinion: I am not a cabinet member, you see, only a deputy minister. I do not attend the cabinet meetings. I think that the Israeli forces will, for the first time, exercise their prerogatives to act inside the West Bank and Gaza. I wish to repeat that this is my personal opinion: No formal decision has been made to do this but I believe that the Israeli forces will exercise their prerogatives and perform missions in the Gaza Strip and West Bank. This is a step backward but the Israeli public has no other response now.

[Al-Jundi] Do you think that the peace process will suffer a setback in the next few days as a result of yesterday's bombing in Tel Aviv?

[Masalihah] There is no ongoing peace process. The Oslo-B process has been completed. There has been some talk about beginning the final status negotiations on 4 May. I was expecting, even before the recent bombings, that they would postpone the final status negotiations because of the Israeli elections in late May so that the newly elected Israeli Government and Knesset might resume the negotiations in June. What has happened is not a setback but I fear that there is a big danger to the reelection chances of the Labor Party and Shim'on Peres. The Israeli public is in a state of despair. Today I feel more pessimistic than I have felt in the past four years. I am saying this: You will regrettably see major repercussions and armed clashes that were not foreseen. I believe that the Israeli forces will mount searches for Hamas members to detain them and put some of them on trial. Israel is trying to regain the initiative now. I wish to note that Israeli moderates have been hard hit by the bombings. Although I don't think the peace process is over, I am sorry to say that it is badly wounded.

[Al-Jundi] Mr. Masalihah, some people are saying that extremists on the Palestinian and Israeli sides are both trying to ruin the peace process. Do you think it very unlikely that Jewish extremists are participating to some degree in these operations, by assisting in their planning, for example with the aim of reducing Shim'on Peres' popularity and helping the election chances of Netanyahu's Likud Bloc?

[Masalihah] I am saying more than this. Jewish and Arab extremists are dancing over the blood. They are not partners; they are enemies. Each side acts alone; yet they have the same objective, namely, to ruin the peace process and smother every hope of peaceful coexistence and cooperation between Jews and Arabs, that is, between Palestinians and Israelis. These are the facts. Extremist Jews killed Rabin. The criminal Goldstein began this process by killing innocent Arabs in Hebron's al-Ibrahimi Mosque. However, the two sides are not cooperating. Their operations seem to be the product of cooperation but they are not working in concert.

[Al-Jundi] Mr. Masalihah, what is the way out of this dark tunnel the peace process has entered, in your view?

[Masalihah] We now face the elections. First of all I am very sorry that the peace process has not been completed with Syria and Lebanon. The situation would be a little better if that had been done, despite the bombings. Now everything is frozen. There is no prospect of peace moves in the next two months.

[Al-Jundi] Do you think that the Israeli elections will be held on time in light of the recent incidents?

[Masalihah] Of course. The Labor Party and its leaders made a mistake by advancing the election date, believing it was for their own good. They were trying to avoid the possible consequences of likely bombings. Now the bombings have caught up with them and provided the rightist Likud with an opportunity to win the elections. I don't see how the Israeli right will agree to postpone the elections. After these 10 days of bombings, the right can see that it is very close to power now. I don't see how the Israeli Knesset can meet to postpone the elections. It has decided on 14 March as a date to dissolve itself. Last week it passed a bill by a very large majority advancing the election date. Therefore the elections will be held at the end of May as scheduled. In my opinion, the Labor Party, which enjoyed the support of a large majority of the Israeli public only two weeks ago, has

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lost this support. I am very disturbed and worried that we might lose the elections.

[Al-Jundi] Based on this, do you think that Benyamin Netanyahu is very close to becoming prime minister?

[Masalihah] After the bombings, yes, he is very close. In light of the government's recent measures and the situation in the past two months, the Labor Party has some chance of winning the elections, but it is a small chance. Still, we have hope. We believe in God and in peace. We will not lose hope, even if it is a small hope.

[Al-Jundi] The Voice of the Arabs thanks you very much.

[Masalihah] You are welcome.

Israel: MK Says Local Arab Councils Transferring Funds to Hamas

TA0603115096 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1100 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Knesset Member [MK] David Mena' said today that Israeli Arab local councils have been contributing money to various charity organizations in the territories, which then transferred the funds to Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the Islamic Jihad. Mena' made this statement at a news conference he convened in Haifa. Our correspondent Qobi Mandel was there:

[Mandel] [passage omitted] Mena' claimed that approximately 1.5 million shekels were funneled in that manner in the past year alone. He added that the security forces are aware of the transfer of funds and that the prime minister, had he wanted, could have taken action similar to that of the U.S. President, who issued a presidential order freezing all the bank accounts of charity organizations that transferred money to the American Islamic Movement which, in turn, transferred it to Israel. [passage omitted]

Israel: Beilin—Peace Process Must Continue; No National Unity Cabinet

TA0503174396 Tel Aviv Educational Television Network in Hebrew 1500 GMT 5 Mar 96

[Interview with Israeli Minister Yosi Beilin by Amnon Levi in the Jerusalem studio—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Levi] You have been dubbed the architect of the Oslo agreement. Did this title turn into a stain?

[Beilin] God forbid. I believe this was one of the most important things done over the past several years. I believe we did the right thing. We dealt with the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict by making peace — which is still far from real peace — an agreement with the PLO, which paved the way for the peace agreement with Jordan and agreements with other Arab countries. I believe it eliminated the option of a future war and completely ended PLO terror.

[Levi] Yesterday, on Popolitiqa, we heard Prof. Shuqa Porat, No. 13 on the Meretz list, not Ari'el Sharon....

[Beilin, interrupts] Also on the Third Way list....

[Levi] Yes, he was on Meretz' list in the previous elections. Anyway, he said: The Oslo agreement led to terror. Let me ask you. Sitting at the cabinet meeting last night, you must have heard the demonstrators outside who chanted bitter calls against the government which, in fact, does not have an unequivocal answer. How did it feel?

[Beilin] We have several solutions. I can't say that we have an absolute solution, nor do I believe anyone has a better solution. Our answer is three-fold: First, uncompromising struggle against Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]; second, cooperation with the Palestinian Authority [PA] so that it intensifies its pressure on Hamas and, as you know, they have done things. Third, continuing...

[Levi, interrupting] Sir, you sat in this studio before and made the same remarks, and nothing happened. Perhaps they cannot do that? Perhaps they don't want to? We experienced four terror attacks in eight days in which dozens were killed. They may have done something, but it was insignificant.

[Beilin] You must make a distinction between what has been done and the attacks. With all due respect to our forces, we were in the territories for nearly 30 years and prevented quite a few things, but not everything. They made several important moves, but not every move they should have, and we will intensify our pressure on the PA.

Third, and most important — in parallel with the other two — we must continue with the peace process. The peace process will turn this group of angry young men into a completely marginal group that, eventually, when a comprehensive peace is established, will be unable to operate and act. No one has a better solution. This is why I am very proud of the peace process, although it is perhaps difficult to say so on a day like today.

[Levi] Perhaps some personal changes are needed? Yesterday, during the cabinet session, a report was leaked out that you, Baraq, and Ramon suggested that Baraq replace Shim'on Peres as defense minister.

[Beilin] Let me tell you something about the intolerable lightness of lying. No one even bothered to ask any

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one of us for a reaction or confirmation of this blurb. Nothing is further from the truth than us doing a thing like that. I believe this is part of some psychological warfare someone is waging, and I greatly regret the fact that serious reporters cited this story.

[Levi] Perhaps it is not such a bad idea. We have a former chief of staff in the cabinet who is certainly an expert on security issues. The idea is not all that silly.

[Beilin] If you wish to raise this proposal, fine. I tell you, however, there is one man today who is the prime minister and the defense minister. He was a prime minister, a defense minister, a deputy defense minister, and Defense Ministry director general. He is Mr. Security. I believe this country can rely on him and fully entrust him with Israel's security. I know I can.

[Levi] What about a national unity government?

[Beilin] With all due respect — and I definitely respect the conduct of the Likud leaders over the past few days — we do not need their advice or their help. We need the nation to be united. We do not need people to sit in the cabinet and tell us that we should stop the political process. It does not take much thinking. These people tried to fight terrorism and brought the War of Lebanon with its 700 fatalities upon us. Really, they give good advice, but let them keep them to themselves. We will stand by our ideas, they by theirs, and we will ask the people to choose.

Israel: Meretz Rejects, MK Sharon Calls For Unity Government

TA0503193996 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Meretz will not participate in a national unity government, if one is established. This was announced by Minister Yosi Sarid following a consultation among the Meretz ministers.

Sarid told our correspondent Yaron Deqel that a unity government will not enhance the effectiveness of the war against terror, but it is liable to bring about the collapse of the Palestinian Authority.

[A later report on the same newscast adds that "Likud Knesset Member Ari'el Sharon has said that an emergency cabinet should be established, and that he is willing to be the defense minister in one. He added that he has not discussed the issue with the prime minister."]

Israel: Peres Convenes Labor Ministers; Election To Proceed on Time

TA0603102196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Peres convened the Labor ministers this morning. From the discussion held, it appears that the ministers oppose the option of a national unity government. Our correspondent Yaron Deqel reports that the prime minister himself did not express a clear view, but it appears that he has no intention of bringing Likud people into the government. At the same time, Peres clarified that he intends to meet with opposition leaders periodically for briefing and consultation purposes. It was also decided that the Knesset elections will be held on time rather than put off.

The only minister who considered the possibility of appointing opposition ministers was Hayim Ramon. The prime minister said he is unwilling to harm the peace process. At the beginning of the session, the prime minister reprimanded Ministers Shetrit and Harish for rushing to the media following the emergency cabinet session held the night of the Dizengoff attack.

Israel: Rabinovich Foresees 'Indefinite' Freeze in Syrian Talks

TA0603094396 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The United States announced an antiterror plan yesterday. Ambassador Itamar Rabinovich assesses that the freeze in the talks with Syria will continue for an indefinite period. Our correspondent Drora Perl reports:

[Begin recording] [Perl] After President Clinton announced immediate practical measures in the war against terror, the United States is expected to increase its initiative and struggle. Amb. Rabinovich welcomed the U.S. decision and explained what we can expect in future:

[Rabinovich] Today, we have already started working on our upcoming missions, which are all the more difficult because they are less defined; however, they relate to the pressure that will be exerted on the Palestinian Authority [PA] to implement the measures we all believe should be taken in the struggle against Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], both on the ground and in terms of garnering support in the Arab world for these efforts.

[Perl] Amb. Rabinovich says the pressure will be directed primarily at PA Chairman Yasir 'Arafat. Rabinovich was again disappointed — although not surprised

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— yesterday when Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' refused to accede to Secretary of State Christopher's request that Syria operate against the terror organizations or at least denounce the attacks. Referring to the negotiations with Syria, Amb. Rabinovich foresees a long period of freeze; however, he is not worried about this.

[Rabinovich] At this point, none of us are speaking about a precise date in the near future for the resumption of the talks. There have already been breaks in these negotiations that went on for months, and when they were resumed, it was usually possible to pick them up from the point where they left off rather than regress in the talks.

[Perl] Rabinovich believes that it is preferable to maintain what he terms constructive ambiguity rather than committing ourselves to a precise date for the resumption of the negotiations with Syria. [end recording]

Israel: Ambassador Views Iranian Threat to Peace Process

PY0503201596 Buenos Aires CLARIN in Spanish 5 Mar 96 p 18

[Article by Sergio Persoglia; copyrighted by CLARIN]

[FBIS Translated Text] During an interview with CLARIN at his super-guarded office in downtown Buenos Aires, Israeli Ambassador to Buenos Aires Yitzhaq Aviran yesterday alleged: "All this stems from Iran, which exports terror and wants to halt the peace process in the Middle East."

The diplomat emphasized: "All the democratic countries must struggle against Iran, using a fierce boycott, to ensure that Iran's support for terrorist groups is closed off."

[Persoglia] Could this string of attacks jeopardize the peace process?

[Aviran] I believe these attacks cannot halt the talks; our next meeting with the Palestinians has been scheduled for May.

[Persoglia] And what Israel's hopes before that meeting?

[Aviran] Yasir 'Arafat must control all these illegal groups, as he had pledged.

[Persoglia] What could happen if he fails to achieve this?

[Aviran] If 'Arafat fails to comply with his commitment, Israel will protect its citizens and our army will enforce the law, even if this affects him negatively, as he is responsible for the security in the autonomous territories.

Ambassador Aviran met yesterday afternoon with Foreign Minister Guido Di Tella. Aviran delivered a message from Israeli Foreign Minister Ehid Baraq, describing the recent attacks. He said: "The message asks Argentina to strongly condemn these attacks, to again condemn terrorism."

[Persoglia] Do you believe a new attack could take place here?

[Aviran] Argentina was already the scene of two attacks and the culprits have not yet been identified. The possibility of a third attack exists.

Aviran believes the people tasked with terrorizing Israelis "are youths who are prepared to commit suicide and are receiving training from religious priests; Shiite fanatics who do not talk about loving one's brethren, but hatred."

In the ambassador's opinion, these youths sacrifice themselves because "they have no work and no education, and because they are told that they will achieve a better life in heaven through these attacks."

Israel: Further on Peres, Shahaq Remarks on Terror, Lebanon Clash

TA0503141696 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1245 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres today toured the site of last night's clash between a Hizballah unit and IDF [Israel Defense Forces] troops in the Margaliyot sector. Avi Lifshitz reports:

[Lifshitz] The prime minister arrived in the company of the chief of staff, his aide de camp Dani Yatom, the Northern Command chief, and some very senior command officers.

The prime minister chose to open his remarks by addressing the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] terror perpetrated inside Israel. He said he did not doubt that all three — Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and Hizballah — were sparing no effort to carry out as many attacks in Israel as they could. Nevertheless, he said, we are making the most serious preparations to meet the challenge on all the terror fronts. He spoke of the numerous arrests and other extensive activities being carried out by the security forces in the field. He said the Hamas infrastructure was beginning to crack. Let us hear what he said:

[Begin Peres recording] It is beginning to be damaged. We have just started. I visited the Central Command

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head with the chief of staff earlier and we heard an updated, detailed description of the curfew clamped on al-Fawwar, the village from which two suicide attackers had come. Our troops went from house to house and made arrests. Houses were sealed and the men in each family were taken in on administrative detention orders. Thus, administrative detentions have begun. There will be continuous, unceasing activity. Whatever has been closed down, will remain so. We will close more, and we will do so more hermetically in a bid to prevent people from entering and exiting Israel in an uncontrolled and unsupervised fashion. [end recording]

[Lifshitz] Asked about the burning political issues, Peres said he did not rule out a national unity government, but refused to elaborate. [In a recorded passage in a similar report on Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1315 GMT on 5 March, Peres says: "I was a member of a national unity government once, and I do not rule it out now. I believe that, at this point, my job is mainly to be a prime minister who is subordinate to the defense minister."]

He added that he had conveyed a message to Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad through President Clinton on Syria's negative role as a terror sponsor. He called on Syria, via the Americans, to curb the terrorist organizations in its territory by tightening the leash on both Hizballah and the headquarters of the rejectionist organizations in Damascus.

Addressing the painful incident in south Lebanon last night, in which nine IDF soldiers were wounded and four killed, Lieutenant General Amnon Shahaq, chief of staff, said that a Golani force riding in a patrol car on the northern border came under fire. One soldier was slightly wounded. The troops went in pursuit of the terrorist squad which, the chief of staff noted, could still be inside the security zone or have left by now. During the pursuit, the troops drove over an explosive charge, as a result the above casualties were incurred. The following are Gen. Lipkin Shahaq's remarks on the issue:

[Begin Shahaq recording] I think the terrorist squad reached the security zone one night earlier and must have stalked our troops in the vicinity of the site where the clash took place, during which time it prepared the explosive charge. I cannot say whether the squad is still inside the zone; all it needed was to march 3.5 km to get out. We are checking the matter. I do not think they planned to get into Israeli territory; I think they planned to attack a patrol. They failed in their attempt to harm the patrol harder than they did. They planned to plant more explosive charges to harm us in that locality later. [end recording]

[Lifshitz] Both the chief of staff and the prime minister noted that Hizballah and Hamas have the same sponsor, and although neither operate in daily cooperation nor exchange information daily, they are financed, abetted, and armed by Iran. The chief of staff further noted that the security forces know that the Hamas members, who had been deported to Lebanon in 1993, got in touch with Hizballah. The chief of staff even assumed that the two organizations had held contacts outside Israeli borders.

Israel: Clinton Urged To Help Peres' Peace Process

TA0503181696 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 5 Mar 96 p B1

[Commentary by Washington correspondent 'Aqiva Eldar: "And Clinton Phoned Peres"]

[FBIS Translated Text] This time President Clinton did not make do with the stencilled statement of sorrow and the consoling phone call to Jerusalem. After Sunday's [3 March] bombing in Jerusalem he summoned his political advisers. Secretary of State Warren Christopher cut short his visit in Trinidad and phoned Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', asking that Damascus finally deign to issue a clear denunciation. He once again summoned his aides upon receiving the first reports about yesterday's bombing in Tel Aviv's Dizengoff Center.

The U.S. establishment is not taking the tragedies striking Israel's citizens lightly. Many are anxious about the fate of the peace process and want to know what repercussions the bombings will have on public opinion. They realize the immediate correlation between these tragedies and the collective mood of Israeli voters. The Likud's platform and Binyamin Netanyahu's nature are not foreign to the Americans. Both the administration and the Jewish community have not forgotten what the lethal Bush-Shamir combination did to Israel-U.S. relations. Moreover, this administration pronounced the peace process in the Middle East a high-level national U.S. interest.

At least one issue pertaining to the bombings in Israel is making Clinton lose sleep more than Shim'on Peres' standing on the eve of the elections. Just like any other domestic or foreign issue making its way to the Oval Office these days, the situation in the Middle East is assessed by campaign advisers before political experts get to voice their opinion. Just like the reconciliation in Ireland, stabilizing Boris Yeltsin's regime in Russia, improving relations with China, and the peace agreement in Bosnia, ending the Middle East conflict is included in the list of foreign policy achievements for which the Clinton administration has been taking credit over the past year.

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Contrary to scholarly predictions, Clinton proved that a president with no foreign policy experience could score impressive international triumphs. He did that magnificently, despite the obstacles piled in his way by one of the most isolationist congresses in modern history. Clinton seemed to bring a cure for every malady in the world with his magic touch. Under his leadership the United States regained the title of superpower, despite the gradual cut in foreign aid by a Congress that turned its back on the world.

Nevertheless, it turns out that hand-shaking ceremonies at the White House and state visits around the world are not enough. Unfortunately for him, Clinton gets to learn that in an election year that there are no miracles in foreign policy, that every blunder takes its toll and every mistake carries a price. Yeltsin's position has been seriously impaired as a result of the U.S. manifest disdain for the remains of Russia's international prestige. Yevgeniy Primakov, who succeeded Andrey Kozyrev, has been instigating China to provoke the Americans and the tension around Taiwan has had the Pentagon on edge. Even the Bosnian Government, which owes its life to Clinton, is sending its soldiers to train in Iran behind his back. The IRA is not pleased with the U.S.-brokered settlement offered to it, and explosions are once again echoing in the heart of London.

Last week, even Hillary Rodham once again reiterated to Jewish and Arab children of Peace Now the promise "to help all those who take risks for the sake of peace." Every child in Washington knows that there is nothing behind such promises. The $100 million that the inhabitants of the territories get from the United States every year (about $50 per capita, as opposed to $600 per capita in Israel) would not have been approved by Congress had it not been for the pleas of the Israeli Embassy and AIPAC [American Israel Public Affairs Committee].

Small wonder then that even Yasir 'Arafat has lost his respect for America, and that the latter has lost its influence over him. Two and a half years ago Clinton declared in front of the whole world that the Gazans would reap the fruits of peace. He himself hastened to collect them, but the United States under his leadership has never risen to the challenge. What is worse, it has not permitted others — mainly in Europe — to take the reins, pay the bill, and take credit.

Christopher called on the Arab countries and the West "to strangle" aid to Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], at a time when a draft bill designed to curtail donations by U.S. citizens to such organizations has been stuck in the House of Representatives since early last summer. After Christopher's 17 visits to Damascus the Clinton administration could not manage to get out of Hafiz al-Asad some denunciation of the Arab terror against Syria's partners to the peace negotiations, not even a word of condolence. Until he went to Malta, Mr. al-Shaqaqi enjoyed Syria's hospitality, while the spokesman for Islamic Jihad in Damascus boasted about the attack at French Hill in Jerusalem, as Syria's representatives were making their way to the U.S. guest house in Maryland.

If Clinton has no burning desire to host Binyamin Netanyahu in the White House this summer, he had better think about a real contribution to Peres' peace process (and I do not mean the project to send an Israeli astronaut to space). A measure of credibility and determination will not hurt him either in an election year.

Israel: Remarks Said To Show Clinton Victim of 'Orwellian Trap'

TA0503130096 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 5 Mar 96 p 6

[Editorial: "The Awakening"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In any other democracy, the events of the past 10 days would have forced the government to resign. This is not because the Labor-Meretz coalition has failed to discharge a fundamental responsibility — ensuring the safety of the country's citizens — but because it has consistently failed to tell the people the truth. In a democracy, almost any policy blunder is forgivable. Deliberately and consistently misleading the people is not.

The government has not perpetrated the misrepresentation alone. The whole world has ardently and enthusiastically participated in this Orwellian orgy of deception. Together they have named a reckless national gamble a "peace process," awarded the world's leading terrorist a Nobel Peace Prize, and concealed brutal facts and ominous warnings with cotton-candy fairy tales.

Plainly, what is going on between Israel and the Palestinian Arabs is not a peace process. The Oslo agreements, the instruments of this putative process, cannot bring peace. They are not a result of painstaking, thoughtful negotiations conducted by experts in relevant fields and submitted to national debate and deliberation. They are a reflection of the Labor government's hasty decision to unilaterally withdraw from Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza.

The thrust of these agreements recalls a child's anguished cry on a Tel Aviv street yesterday. "Enough, enough, enough," she said with heart-breaking frustration. The irresistible desire to say "Enough!" to

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an embarrassing, agonizing, and image-tarnishing intifadah was what animated the Labor government. Mindlessly, haphazardly, and recklessly, it allowed starry-eyed wishful thinkers, with little experience and virtually no knowledge of the region, to fashion a fantasy inspired by the utopian vision of a terminal dreamer. With the best intentions in the world, and catering to Israel's insatiable hunger for peace, they managed to turn a wise, scarred nation which should have known better into a jelly of gullibility.

It is a pity that President Bill Clinton, probably the most devoted friend Israel has ever had in the White House, has also fallen into this Orwellian trap. Yesterday, he portrayed the Islamist suicide bombers as "opponents of the peace process" out to undermine Yasir 'Arafat. If 'Arafat had truly opposed terrorism and wanted peace, he would not have arranged a 21-gun salute for Yahya Ayyash, "The Engineer," who dispatched suicide bombers to kill 50 Israelis nor would he have called for a jihad against Israel, nor cite the 1974 plan to destroy Israel in phases in every speech, nor publicly lionize suicide bombers and other terrorists. Nor would he and his ministers, including the ever-so civilized Nabil Sha'th, insult the world's intelligence by blaming Israeli "extremists" for helping the suicide bombers.

These bombers and their dispatchers are not out to undermine 'Arafat and his regime, and they are not opposed to a process which entails Israeli withdrawal. Had they really wanted to end the process, they would have blown themselves up near 'Arafat and his entourage, not in downtown Tel Aviv.

What the terrorists want is painfully obvious. They want Israel to withdraw faster, from all the territories, and ultimately from the region. Above all, they want to get credit for this withdrawal. Unfortunately, they have good reason to believe they will achieve precisely that. Over and over again, with a persistence bordering on the obscene, they have been assured that no matter what they do, no matter how many Israelis they slaughter, Israel will continue "the process" and its withdrawal.

It is a terrorist's dream come true. For in the eyes of the Palestinians, particularly their young, it is the terrorists' self- sacrificing, heroic acts which are responsible for Israel's retreat, not Israel's noble determination. They believe, not without reason, that only intifadah violence and the killing of Israelis caused Israel to recognize the PLO and sue for peace. If Israel continues to retreat under fire, this belief will become an article of faith.

It will be a shame if Clinton lets himself be seduced into encouraging terrorism by parroting yet again the call for the continuation of the process. What Israel needs from its friends in the U.S. is what it needs from itself at this time: to face the truth. And the truth is that 'Arafat will not fight fellow Arabs to satisfy Israel or even the U.S. He may put on a good show. He may manage to convince Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] it should cease operations for a while. And he may even put some of them behind bars and use the opportunity to kill a few insignificant operatives. But he will not eliminate the terrorist infrastructure.

'Arafat is not part of the solution; he is a major part of the problem. For sooner or later Israel will have to wake up and do what it should have done long ago — go after the terrorists with its own forces. At that time, it will have to face an army of 50,000 well-armed Palestinians, and perhaps a sovereign Palestinian state.

It will not be easy nor will it be pleasant. But by then, it will probably not be called a peace process.

Israel: IAEA's Blix Said To Make 'Secret' Visit 'Last Week'

TA0603102696 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 6 Mar 96 p A1

[Report by Aluf Ben]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Hans Blix, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA], paid a 24-hour visit to Israel last week and conferred with Prime Minister Shim'on Peres and Gid'on Frank, director general of Israel's Atomic Energy Commission.

Blix's visit was kept secret, and the Prime Minister's Office did not provide any details. The spokesman for the Atomic Energy Commission said in reply to a question that "the IAEA director general paid a short visit to Israel which was used for professional consultations and mutual updates."

A senior IAEA team — possibly including Blix himself — will soon go to Iran to investigate suspicions that the Iranians are setting up a secret plant to enrich uranium through centrifugation which could be used for the development of nuclear weapons. [passage omitted]

Israel: Tel Aviv Bombing Property Damage Estimated at NIS 8 Million

TA0603114496 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 6 Mar 96 p 8

[Report by Jennifer Friedlin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Preliminary reports estimated that more than NIS [new Israeli shekels] 8 million in property damage was caused by Monday's [4 March] suicide bombing at Dizengoff Center, the Treasury said yesterday.

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Following the bombing, appraisers from the Treasury's property and income tax division combed the streets around Dizengoff Center.

By the end of the night they had assessed damages to some 40 stores, three banks and about 150 private apartments.

Glaziers spent the night repairing windows and closing stores, as special security guards patrolled the area watching over damaged and unprotected businesses and buildings.

About 150 claims had been filed by yesterday afternoon.

The property tax division has set up a special office to offer specific information about any property damage and the glaziers who may have made any necessary repairs.

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Jordan: Cabinet Spokesman Denies Amman's Involvement in Bombings

JN0503222196 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Council of Ministers held a meeting today under the chairmanship of Acting Prime Minister Dr. 'Abdallah al-Nusur and reviewed the political and security situation in the region in light of the recent terrorist operations. The council was briefed by Interior Minister 'Awad Khulayfat and Water and Irrigation Minister Samir Qa'war on the results of the visit they paid to the Palestinian National Authority [PNA] carrying a message from His Majesty King Husayn and His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the regent, to PNA President Yasir 'Arafat.

An official spokesman for the government said that the position of the Jordanian king, Government, and people is clear toward these terrorist operations that kill innocent and peaceful civilians and harm the goals of independence and freedom, for which the Palestinian Arab people have struggled for a long time and offered thousands of martyrs.

He asserted that what is taking place is an open invitation to reoccupy the Gaza Strip and the West Bank and to push the extremist forces and the politicized religious right wing in Israel to the forefront of the political leadership. He said that every military action should be linked to political objectives, and we do not see in what has taken place anything other than releasing the Israeli extremist forces from their shackles to carry out serious revenge actions in the PNA areas and southern Lebanon and hold on to the Palestinian territories.

He added that individual violence in a nation's experiences is doomed to failure and has never produced any objective results that would contribute to a nation's goals of freedom, independence, and progress. He asserted that the results of violence and counterviolence will cause extremely severe damage to the life of our brothers and will increase their suffering at a time when the whole world is trying to back them to build their life and their state like other nations throughout the world. These terrorist actions, he said, will empty the efforts of all world forces working for peace from the human aspect of the Palestine question, for which the Palestinians have suffered more than any people can endure.

Asked by the radio's correspondent on statements trying to involve Jordan in the bombings in Israel, Muhammad Dawudiyah, acting Information minister and youth minister, said:

[Begin Dawudiyah recording] We express our pain and regret at these totally unjust statements. There is no indication that Jordan is involved in such a conspiracy and terrorist, hostile actions. Jordan is awaiting material evidence of its alleged involvement from any party which tries to hold Jordan responsible and disavows his own responsibilities. There is no executive organ, office, or institution in Jordan that may lead to Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] carrying out such crimes. Hamas has only an information bureau in Jordan—a bureau which exercises controlled media activity that will not lead to such operations. We view these statements as unjust and an attempt to implicate Jordan in a matter it denounces and counters with all its might and in cooperation with all the Arab brothers. We hope there will be a response to the Arab and international effort to oppose extremist and foolish practices in the region. [end recording]

Jordan: Article Comments on Accussations of Amman Sheltering Hamas

JN0603111596 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 6 Mar 96 p 21

[Article by Yasir Abu-Hilalah]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amidst regional and international clamor following the recent explosions which shocked Israeli society, Dr. Nabil Sha'th, adviser to the Palestinian president and minister of planning and international cooperation, made a statement to the newspaper LE MONDE accusing Jordan of sheltering the historical leadership of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and saying that there is an Iranian network in Amman working through 'Imad al-Alami [Hamas member].

Khalid Islam, one of the Palestinian president's assistants, made the same statement only more clearly to Reuter when he said: The extremist Hamas groups in Jordan and Syria are responsible for the suffering of the Palestinian people.

The above statement clearly reflects that the Palestinian leadership is confused and is evading its responsibilities by exporting its crisis abroad, although this confirms its failure to fulfill its obligations toward the Israeli Government, not to mention its obligations toward its people.

It is surprising that an official as important as Nabil Sha'th should speak about the presence of Hamas Leader 'Imad al-'Alami in Amman, when it is widely known at least to politicians and newsmen that 'Imad al-'Alami is the head of the Hamas office in Damascus, and before that he was the head of its office in Tehran. Moreover, al-'Alami was deported by the Jordanian

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Government along with Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq, despite the pressure which was brought to bear at the time to stop their deportation. Those concerned with the issue, and supposedly Sha'th is one of them, saw al-'Alami on international television networks attending Dr. Fathi al-Shaqaqi's funeral in Damascus. Jordan had earlier deported the second senior diplomat at the Iranian Embassy in Amman, and currently relations with Tehran are not pleasant.

So what is the justification for speaking about an Iranian network? Is it just a desire to implicate Jordan? The Jordanian Government's declared policy and actions are clear. It has never believed that bombings, kidnappings, or assassination of athletes are forms of struggle to achieve national aims. However, Sha'th seems to have a different position.

Jordanian officials on all levels have not stopped reiterating that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and that there is no presence for Hamas in Jordan. Jordan is the only Arab country which treats the Palestinian president as the head of state on the protocol level. Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti was also the first Arab foreign minister to visit the capital of the self-rule area. All this and more is met by directing accusations and arousing suspicions in an extremely sensitive situation and in a very complicated and serious atmosphere.

Jordan refuses to be treated like the Israeli right wing, which the Palestinian Leadership tries to link with Hamas to serve the election aims of the Labor party, particularly since Jordan is not competing with anyone.

If Hamas is a terrorist organization from the Palestinian Leadership's viewpoint, then why did 'Arafat meet with Dr. al-Zahhar following the bombing incident? And, why did he meet with the Hamas leadership in Tunis, Khartoum and finally Cairo? Did he not also meet with members of 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Battalions following the kidnaping of Toledano.

'Arafat knows more than anyone else that Hamas' media presence in Jordan is not any different from its media presence in the UK, the United States, and many Arab and Islamic states. He also knows that the Jordanian citizens who support Hamas and adopt its stands are only subject to the Jordanian Constitution, which prohibits their deportation and at the same time guarantees their right to free opinion and expression.

'Arafat has previously tried to include Hamas in the Palestinian National Council and begged it to be part of the recently elected Legislative Council. 'Arafat and his wife have also extended condolences on the death of engineer Ibrahim 'Ayyash. If 'Arafat's attitude toward Hamas is acceptable and justified, why then is Jordan denied the right to adopt a similar attitude or even a milder one?

The official Jordanian position is balanced, moderate, and eager to preserve historical relations with the Palestinian people. The Palestinian Leadership is required to explain its statements, if not change them altogether, if the twin relationship means more to it than mere statements which are made at the airport before taking off aboard a Jordanian plane.

Jordan: Ministers Carry King's Message on Terrorism to 'Arafat

JN0503122596 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 5 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Nirmin Murad]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—Jordan on Monday sent two senior ministers to Gaza with a message from His Majesty King Husayn to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat apparently to offer Jordan's help in countering the wave of militant violence that is threatening the Middle East peace process.

Information Minister Marwan al-Mu'ashshir declined comment on the content of the message, but said the decision to send Interior Minister 'Awad Khulayfat and Water and Irrigation Minister Samir Qa'war to Gaza was taken immediately after the news of Monday's bombing in Tel Aviv reached here.

Mr. Khulayfat and Mr. Qa'war, both members of Parliament, are close confidants of Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti and also members of the inner cabinet.

"They will deliver a message from the King to Mr. 'Arafat," said Dr. al-Mu'ashshir without elaboration.

Dr. al-Mu'ashshir reiterated Jordan's condemnation of terrorism and said the Kingdom feared the fourth blast in eight days on Monday could jeopardise efforts to achieve peace in the Middle East.

"This is becoming very dangerous to the whole peace process and we cannot sit idle while these forces attempt to derail the peace process," Dr. al-Mu'ashshir said.

"We will do everything we can to keep the peace process on track," he told Reuters.

The Jordan News Agency, PETRA, said the King's message to Mr. 'Arafat dealt with means to support the Palestinian National Authority, to exchange views, and to enhance cooperation to confront the recent incidents.

Informed sources said the Jordanian move came in line with a pledge Mr. al-Kabariti made in a telephone

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conversation with his Israeli counterpart Shim'on Peres on Sunday that Jordan would not "sit idle and limit to verbal condemnation its response" to the violence that is casting serious questions on the future of the peace process.

Dr. al-Mu'ashshir did not say whether the two ministers' talks in Gaza will cover Mr. 'Arafat's handling of the militant Hamas movement whose military wing, 'Iz-al-Din al-Qassam, has claimed responsibility for the attacks against Israeli civilians.

Hamas has an information office in Amman, but it is not known whether the message from the King to Mr. 'Arafat contains any reference to it.

Mr. 'Arafat has called on all Arab countries to crack down on Hamas and the smaller Islamic Jihad, the two groups which are the fiercest opponents of the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace agreements.

Informed sources told the JORDAN TIMES that for Jordan to continue to host the Hamas office in the Kingdom may not be a pressing issue as long as the movement stuck to the letter of its agreement with the Jordanian Government allowing its presence. But Jordan, these sources said, will not allow any violations of the law here by Hamas or any other group.

Hamas has two spokespersons in Amman who have been maintaining contact with international press as well as Palestinians living in Jordan which account for a large percentage of the population here.

The sources said that if the mandate of the Hamas office here extended beyond its information capacity "Jordan cannot allow the peace process to be hindered."

Jordan: Ministers Brief Prince on Gaza Visit, 'Arafat Meeting

JN0503175396 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the regent, chaired a three-hour meeting at the Armed Forces General Command this morning. The audience included Dr. 'Abdallah al-Nusur, acting prime minister and higher education minister; Interior Minister 'Awad Khulayfat; Engineer 'Abd-al-Hadi al-Majali, minister of public works and housing and acting defense minister; Engineer Samir Qa'war, minister of water and irrigation; Staff General 'Abd-al-Hafiz Mar'i al-Ka'abinah; the directors of the security departments; and senior Armed Forces officers.

At the beginning of the meeting, his highness, as well as the audience, were fully briefed by Interior Minister Dr. 'Awad Khulayfat and Eng. Samir Qa'war, the minister of water and irrigation, on the results of their meetings in Gaza yesterday with Yasir 'Arafat, president of the Palestinian National Authority, and the assessment of the recent incidents they and the Palestinian side made during their meeting in Gaza.

Dr. Khulayfat briefed his highness the regent on the Palestinian view of the current escalation of violence and its negative impact on the peace process, as well as the assertion the Jordanian delegation made to Yasir 'Arafat and the Palestinian officials that Jordan is always eager to support the Palestinian people and their legitimate leadership to win their rights and independence on the soil of the Palestinian homeland, and that it will spare no effort to cooperate on the regional and international levels in order to advance the peace process.

His Highness Prince Hasan, the regent, then listened to a general assessment of the current situation in the region from the competent ministers and Staff General 'Abd-al-Hafiz Mar'i al-Ka'abinah, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; the directors of the Public Security Department, the General Intelligence, and the competent organs.

His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the regent, then spoke. He instructed everyone to remain cautious, stressing the need to follow up what is taking place in the region in line with His Majesty King Husayn's desire to keep Jordan an example of stability and safety, enable it to have a positive impact on the surrounding area, and prevent the current incidents from having a negative effect on us.

His Highness Prince Hasan stressed the awareness of the Jordanian citizens, who have been tested over past decades and during major changes, and who have proved their ability to preserve the national interests. His highness the regent then tackled the recent incidents and the dangerous inhuman operations carried out against Israel, noting that the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, which has always demonstrated a clear and firm stand to enhance the spirit of moderation under all circumstances, will continue to derive its options from the spirit of the nation and from tolerance, which has descended to us from the sacred message that God has granted us.

Jordan: Prince Hasan Outlines Stand on Suicide Attacks, Terrorism

JN0503192996 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1700 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan the regent has said that the latest esca-

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lation of suicide bombings in Israel is dangerous and inhumane.

His highness pointed out that Jordan was always firm in its stand calling for moderation, adding that despite all circumstances the kingdom's options have been based on the spirit of a nation characterized by tolerance.

The regent went on to explain the Jordanian position as regards suicide bombing. He said the bloody escalation has proved its impotence, and was unable to achieve any gains for its perpetrators.

He said that Jordan always strongly denounced such barbarous acts as it did condemned the killing of the Israeli sports team in Munich in the early 1970's. His highness said that Jordan was committed to condemn extremism and terrorism of whatever type.

His highness said that the Jordanian democratic choice came in response to the wish of His Majesty King Husayn and the high expectations of Jordanians.

The regent made his remarks during a meeting at the General Command of the Armed Forces. He said at the same time the political parties in Jordan should be aware of the great challenges which need concerted efforts to protect this unique experiment through the exercise of highest level of political awareness and be bound by the requirements of the democratic process.

The regent spoke about the phenomenon of international terrorism that does not have any identity or homeland. He said the recurrence of terrorist acts in Tokyo, Oklahoma, Tel Aviv, and London is a new proof that this phenomenon needs an international effort to fight it. He said that Jordan which realize that Islam is the religion of tolerance is above all charges of terrorism, adding that all citizens should stand up to confront, negate, and belie this accusation.

At the start of the meeting, the regent listened to a detailed and comprehensive report by Minister of Interior Dr. 'Awad Khulayfat and Samir Qa'war, minister of water and irrigation, on the outcome of the meeting yesterday with President of the Palestinian Authority Yasir 'Arafat.

In Gaza, the Jordanian and Palestinian sides assessed the recent happenings. Dr. Khulayfat briefed his royal highness on the Palestinian view regarding the recent spread of violence and its negative repercussions on the peace process.

The Jordanian team reconfirmed to President 'Arafat and the Palestinian officials Jordan's solid stance in supporting the Palestinian people and its legitimate leadership to regain their rights and independence of their national soil.

The two Jordanian ministers said that the kingdom would do its utmost to continue its firm cooperation on the regional and international levels to push the peace process ahead.

The regent then listened to a general appraisal of the current conditions in the region from the ministers, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General 'Abd-al-Hafiz Mar'i, and the director general of the Public Security, Intelligence, and other concerned departments.

Jordan: Two IAF Deputies Break Ranks in Confidence Vote

JN0503132496 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 5 Mar 96 pp 1, 7

[Report by Sa'idah Kilani]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—The decision by Islamic Action Front (IAF) Deputy Ahmad al-Kassasibah to abstain and fellow IAF Deputy Dhib 'Abdallah to give the government of 'Abd-al-Karim al- Kabariti his vote of confidence could not be considered a split in Jordan's largest political group though the two will be held accountable to not following the party line, IAF Spokesman Hamzah Mansur said Monday [4 March].

"We will study all violations committed by members who went against the IAF's will," Mr. Mansur told the JORDAN TIMES shortly after the vote of confidence session—in which the new government obtained a sweeping support of 57 lawmakers—came to an end. "They have voted against the IAF's collective decision to withhold confidence from the government without informing us of their intention beforehand."

Fourteen of the 17 IAF members in the House withheld the vote of confidence in line with their party's decision.

Although Dr. 'Abdallah expressed hopes that the IAF would understand his position, Mr. Mansur said his stand coupled with that of Mr. al-Kassasibah would be evaluated separately and the "right action" would be taken by the front's executive bureau and Shura council.

Mr. Mansur said the IAF had made its decision to withhold confidence and all deputies who are IAF members should respect it.

Asked why the IAF voted against the government, Mr. Mansur said that its demands were not met in full neither in the government's policy statement presented to the House last Wednesday nor in Mr. al-Kabariti's reply to the deputies' remarks.

Mr. Mansur said there were substantial differences in points of views between the government and the front over the Palestinian issue, the Kingdom's policy towards

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Iraq, the issue of normalisation of ties with Israel, and the need to apply Islamic Sharia law.

Mr. Mansur, who said he represented IAF bloc at Parliament in his speech on Sunday, submitted to Mr. al-Kabariti a set of 15-point proposals in return for an IAF vote of confidence. Most important of all was a pledge from the government to apply Islamic Sharia law, and refrain from promoting normalisation of relations with Israel. In its list of demands, the IAF did not mention the Kingdom's policy towards Iraq nor its call to abrogate the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty.

Mr. Mansur said IAF leaders met with Mr. al-Kabariti last week but did not feel the government was committed to these issues as it had been the case between the Islamists and former Prime Minister Mudar Badran. At the time, a deal was struck between both parties and Islamists assumed ministerial portfolios in return for their vote of confidence.

But the two deputies who went against the IAF's decision on Monday had other concerns.

Mr. al-Kassasibah said he could not overcome his feelings of loyalty to his constituents who informed him of their wish to support Mr. al-Kabariti's government in its endeavour to introduce sweeping changes in the Kingdom. Caught between his responsibility towards his constituents and his allegiance to his party, Mr. al-Kassasibah said, he neither gave nor denied the government his vote. He abstained.

'Abdallah al-'Akayilah, a prominent IAF deputy and a former minister of education, was absent because he was in Sudan. His absence could be translated as a protest against the front and the government.

The story of Deputy 'Abdallah dates back to 1993 when he ran in the parliamentary elections against the wishes of the front. His decision was not accepted by the front at the time since it had decided on a final list of candidates all over the Kingdom that excluded him. But after he won the race, the front tried to lure him back, especially that the number of IAF deputies has dramatically decreased from 23 in the 11th Parliament to only 16 members in the present House.

Shortly after the formation of the government of Mr.al-Kabariti last month, Dr. 'Abdallah and a couple of other deputies, including Mr. al-Kassassibah, protested against the front's decision not to accept the invitation from Mr. al-Kabariti to join his government. The decision was taken during a meeting between IAF leaders and Muslim Brotherhood leaders who rejected participating in any "pro- peace" government.

But the angry IAF members, especially Dr. 'Abdallah, argue that the al-Kabairiti government was different than its predecessors, especially that it showed sincere intention to enhance freedoms and democracy. As to peace with Israel, they contended, the issue should not be a main point of contention since it was beyond any government's control.

There were no splits within the front at the time, but the incident reflected the widening gap between moderates and hardliners within the largest Islamic group in the country.

The gap even became clearer when Mr. al-Kassasibah and Dr. 'Abdallah went against the IAF's decision. Dr. 'Abdallah told the JORDAN TIMES that his decision was based on and related to his constituents' demands especially their plea to reduce sentences on eight Afghan prisoners.

"I conveyed their demands and their sufferings to the premier and on his part he promised to do all he can...," Dr. 'Abdallah said. "But it is not only that, he (Mr. al-Kabariti) was described (by my constituents) as an honest, ambitious person who deserves our vote of confidence. I could not have gone against their wishes."

It is yet not clear what action the IAF will adopt against the two deputies. But it is not expected to be a harsh decision since the front could not afford splits within its ranks.

Even in its speech at the vote of confidence session, the IAF bloc did not express the fierce opposition to government policies as they did to previous governments. Their statement was very placid. Except for Dr. 'Abdallah and Mr. al-Kassassibah, who insisted on delivering their own speeches, all other Islamic deputies chose not to speak and contented with Mr. Mansur's statement, which could not be considered as typical of the usually critical IAF.

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Lebanon: Hamas Representative Says Attacks 'Legitimate'

NC0603073996 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Hamas Movement in Lebanon has issued a statement saying that the recent operations in Israel were a reaction to Israeli threats, because the fight of a person under occupation is a legitimate fight sanctioned by international laws and regulations. The Movement said these operations are part of Hamas' policy against the enemy's judaization of Jerusalem, as well as its policy against the rights of the Palestinian people and their cold-blooded murder. [Words indistinct] the Movement in Beirut, [words indistinct], who issued the statement, said the recent operations are legitimate jihad operations that cannot be labeled terrorist. He condemned the double standards of some sides that condemned the Hamas operations while remaining quiet about the enemy's hijacking of Dr. Fathi al-Shaqaqi, Yahya 'Ayyash, and others. He also condemned the rabid media campaign by the enemy and 'Arafat's authority and expressed his belief that this is an attempt to cover up for the failure of what has been called the settlement.

Lebanon: Islamists React to Bombings

NC0603080096 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Reactions continue to the martyrdom operations. Jordan's Muslim Brotherhood has issued a statement asserting that the operations carried out by the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, and other mujahidin factions in Palestine are a form of resistance sanctioned by divine teachings, international law, and human rights, because the aggression is continuing, the occupation remains a fact, and killing, jailing, torture, and displacement remain a daily phenomenon suffered by the Palestinians.

Sayyid Husayn al-Musawi, leader of the Islamic Amal Movement in Lebanon, addressed greetings to the martyrs of Jerusalem and the resisting defenders of Palestine. He pointed out that defending freedom and dignity and searching for liberation are a legitimate right and, indeed, every oppressed nation's sacred obligation. He added that the attempt to pressure the Arab nation or to accuse Iran will not change the facts. He said that striking at the resistance infrastructure is like normalization [words indistinct], because strong faith produces a love of martyrdom. He denounced the so-called UN Security Council's position on the martyrdom operations in occupied Palestine.

The Islamic Amal leader reminded the world that those who are driven to despair and lose hope of regaining their land and sanctities by peaceful means are not terrorists when they defend their land. If they are considered terrorists, all resisting nations will be viewed as terrorists.

Dr. Fathi Yakan, leader of the Islamic Group's parliamentary group in the Chamber of Deputies, said he believes that the martyrdom operations in the occupied territories and south Lebanon will continue and increase. He added that these operations express the injustice and provocation suffered by the Palestinian people over 50 years and are a consequence of the mass extermination wars carried out by the usurping Zionist entity.

Yakan added: Israel, the United States, other countries, Yasir 'Arafat, and the other Arab leaders must realize that these operations are not the exclusive domain of one group, but have become an overwhelming emotional phenomenon that cannot be stopped by a simple decision. Nor can they be halted by oppressive measures, because every Palestinian who has an atom of dignity in his heart has turned into a potential bombing martyr.

Deputy Ahmad Suwayd said that every entity established on foundations of treachery, injustice, aggression, racism, and usurpation can never enjoy comfort and stability. He declared that no power can make the oppressed people and the Arab nation accept this entity as part of themselves and [words indistinct] can spare it from facing its inevitable fate.

Lebanon: Commentary—Hamas Attacks Spell 'Political Death' for Peres

NC0603115996 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 6 Mar 96

[From the "Pause With an Event" program: "The Martyrdom Operations and Peres' Political Assassination"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. The killing of Zionist settlers on passenger buses is the chief news item circulating among the Arabs. But they do not gloat over what befalls those who occupied the land of Palestine and expelled its inhabitants. They denounce, threaten, promise retribution, and express solidarity with the enemy prime minister, Shim'on Peres, who might meet political death as a result of the martyrdom attacks.

As political observers we used to notice that most Arab leaders back the Zionist Labor Party and want no other party to rule. Now this idea is changing. True, the Arab desert nomads [A'rab; term used derogatively] see in

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Peres an ally, friend, and brother. But they do not consider the Likud Bloc, or Benyamin Netanyahu, something hateful or a nonentity. Perhaps [words indistinct] is coming to power to continue the process of normalization. Perhaps they are adhering to the adage: Whoever marries my mother I will call uncle.

The permanent victim is the Palestinian nation, the land of Palestine, its history, future, and present. The victim has never been cowardly. But it has never acted with the lion-like boldness with which it is acting today. Its eagles swoop down on the flocks of Zionist rabbits [rabbit in Arabic parlance is synonymous with cowardice, like mouse in English], wounding or killing them. Four martyrdom operations have caused the deaths of about 60 terrorists and wounded dozens, some of whose injuries are serious or indeed very serious. All this is done in revenge for the blood of the martyrs murdered by the Zionists, including the blood of the martyr engineer, Yahya 'Ayyash. Only 30 minutes separated the first from the second operation, a week separated the second from the third, and one day separated the third from the fourth. In the third operation, marking a week after the second, to demonstrate the power of Muhammad's Islam, the martyrdom operation's martyr, Islam Muhammad, carried out his heroic operation in the same place as the second and on bus number 18, the same number as the bus bombed in the second operation. Islam Muhammad struck at the occupation's heart, inflicting a mortal wound. The entire entity was shaken. The settlement negotiations and Yasir 'Arafat's alleged state were shaken along with it.

The Zionists and the 'Arafatists imagined that the fire of the Islamist intifadah had died down but it burst again into flames, its heat searing and tearing dozens of Zionists into lifeless limbs. The martyrdom operations occurred about 90 days before the Israeli parliamentary elections [words indistinct]. Shim'on Peres' election campaign reeled under the impact of the burning buses' wheels. It is no longer possible to speculate that Peres will head the government again. While Yitzhaq Rabin paid with his life, his successor has paid or is about to pay his political life as a price for the injustice and tyranny exercised by the usurper Israel against the Palestinian people.

The martyrdom operations carried out by the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, in the occupied territories have become a smothering presence in the Zionists' life; they now closely resemble the firing of Katyusha rockets by Lebanon's Islamic Resistance fighters at Zionist colonies in northern Palestine. The rocket attacks created a balance of terror between southern Lebanese citizens and Zionist northerners, thus preventing the occupation forces from continuing their threats and aggression against peaceable Lebanese villages and towns. Perhaps the martyrdom operations will make the enemy think a thousand times before again assassinating a Palestinian struggler. The blood of Fathi al-Shaqaqi and Yahya 'Ayyash has forced the enemy to pay a dear price, represented by the lives of its individuals, their security, and the very future of the occupation.

After Jerusalem's first operation and the one in Ashqelon the enemy's government called on 'Arafat's authority to impose stricter measures on Hamas and Islamic Jihad and destroy their infrastructure. It sent its army chief of staff to meet Yasir 'Arafat and present him with a joint U.S.-Israeli list of the Islamists whom 'Arafat's authority was asked to arrest. Amnon Shahaq asked 'Arafat to hand over the wanted men after arresting them and gave him important lessons in antiterrorist methods, as Shahaq put it. 'Arafat did not shirk from this task and ordered his police to arrest 450 people on charges of belonging to Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

Now, following the third and fourth martyrdom operations, Peres, his government, and all his security and military organs [words indistinct]. A decision was made not to resume the stumbling negotiations with Syria, which were due to resume today. The enemy's government asked allied Arab governments to adopt concrete measures against Hamas and Islamic Jihad supporters. King Husayn hastened to comply with Peres' appeal and the Israeli [word indistinct], promising to step up his campaign against Islamist activists. We do not know what more His Majesty will do. The Islamist struggler who is president of the Jordanian Engineers Association remains in jail and many of his brother opponents of the peace treaty with the enemy languish in dungeons. The king might now resort to closing the offices of Islamic movements and getting court verdicts passed against many of their members to appease Peres and Israel.

The latest operation's impact on Washington was no less than it was on occupied Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. Official U.S. sources voiced fears that the martyrdom operation would not only hinder the negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, but would also freeze talks on the Syrian track until after the Israeli elections in May. We do not know if the Zionists are demanding that Damascus condemn the anti-Zionist operations as a condition for resuming the negotiations.

Damascus' firm response was that it was not going to be a party to the Israeli elections, because Arab condemnation of the operations means backing Peres. Unlike the other Arabs, Damascus does not believe there is a difference between Israel's Labor Party and the

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Likud. If there is a difference at all it is like the one between a black and a multicolored monster.

The votes Peres gained following Yitzhaq Rabin's assassination have now been lost as a consequence of the martyrdom operations. He is no longer the favored candidate to head the next enemy government.

The martyrdom operations did not set out to interfere in the Israeli elections. They had clear objectives: to avenge Dr. al- Shaqaqi's and Engineer 'Ayyash's blood. Actually, three or four operations do not liberate Palestine or immediately restore it to its rightful owners, but they did illustrate anew that the negotiations are effectively one-sided. After all, Peres described the Oslo agreement thus: We were negotiating with ourselves.

Will 'Arafat learn from what is happening and seek to change the negotiating formula into a (?bilateral) one? It does not look like he is learning anything. He has come to regard the Zionists as brothers and the Palestinians as criminals and enemies of Palestine and the political settlement. 'Arafat declared the operation two days ago to be a form of dangerous terrorism directed, not against the Israelis, but against the Palestinians. This is how someone who has lost the faculty of discernment thinks.

On the Israeli side the results of the three operations will become apparent inside the government, the security agencies, and in the religious rulings of the rabbis, who formerly urged Israeli soldiers not to obey orders to evacuate the West Bank towns.

The age of martyrdom operations is an age of freedom and dignity. While sacrificing one's life is the highest form of courage and generosity, its reward is the most exalted degree of honor. It is Muhammad's Islam. This is the age of liberation, jihad, zeal [the word, meaning Hamas, is intended as a pun], and resistance.

Lebanon: Buwayz—Peace Talks Resumed for Sake of 'Continuation'

NC0503165296 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1400 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz stated that a response to the acts of violence in Israel should come through serious support for negotiations that will block the way for anyone trying to undermine the peace process, if the intentions are sincere.

At a press conference he held this afternoon, he said he hoped that these acts will not provide justification for those in Israel who adopt extremist policies to undermine the peace process. He noted that negotiations on the Syrian-Israeli track were resumed just for the sake of their continuation.

Lebanon: Buwayz Hopes 'Cycle of Violence' Will End

NC0503162196 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz said he hoped that the cycle of violence will end, although we cannot ignore the violence and terrorism practiced by Israel. He added:

[Begin Buwayz recording] We cannot deal with one aspect of violence in this region and ignore the violence and terrorism practiced by Israel against neighboring countries, particularly in south Lebanon. We do not wish to see violence and hope that a time will come when this regional violence will end and give way to a just and real peace. Today we regret what is happening in general and call to the world's attention in particular that there are daily victims of terrorism in south Lebanon. Naturally, this issue will have a real impact on the peace process. This issue will affect the political life inside Israel and, in turn, will reflect on the regional situation. We believe that any field action must take the political horizon into account so as not to bring about the opposite of the desired goal. Thus, we hope that these actions will not provide an excuse or reason for those who believe in extremist options in Israel to blow up the peace process. [end recording]

Regarding the suspension of Israeli-Syrian negotiations, Buwayz said that these negotiations had continued only to conceptualize previously proposed ideas. He hoped that the negotiations would be resumed as soon as possible to block the way for those desiring to undermine the peace process.

Regarding the renewal of the U.S. travel ban [to Lebanon], Buwayz said the ban had been justified during the civil war. But the U.S. Administration's failure to make a firm decision now to revoke the ban is unjustified, he added.

Concerning President al-Hirawi's election plan, Buwayz said it was a political idea which President al-Hirawi passed on to the politicians to discuss.

Lebanon: Iran's Habibi Visits, Asserts Congruence of Stands With Syria

JN0103174896 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1540 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Beirut, 1 Mar (SANA)—Iranian Vice President Dr. Hasan Habibi has stressed that the Syrian-Iranian relations are deep-rooted, and described them as firm and entrenched. He said: Understanding between the two countries' leaderships is deep and

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comprehensive, and there is nothing at all on which we disagree.

In a statement to the Lebanese newspaper AL-SAFIR published today, Habibi added: Our relations with Syria are strong, and we are informed of Syria's stands toward the Middle East issues.

Dr. Hasan Habibi explained that during his visit to Damascus, the Iranian-Syrian relations and the region's issues were discussed, stressing that there was no disagreement on even a single letter. He added: There is nothing at all on which we disagree.

Lebanon: Iran's Habibi—No Differences of Opinion in Talks With al-Asad

LD0103185096 Tehran IRNA in English 1828 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Beirut, March 1, IRNA — Iran's first vice-president, Hasan Habibi, has said that the reason the U.S. regards Iran as the biggest barrier in the way of its regional policies, is the firm opposition of the Iranian people to Washington's hegemonic policy. The Lebanese newspaper 'AL-SAFIR' which carried Habibi's interview on Friday, focused on the independent policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in all areas.

It quoted Iran's first vice-president as saying that Iran-Syrian relations were "stable". Habibi has also said that firm and profound understanding prevails between the two countries, noting that during the three-hour talks which he had with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad in Damascus earlier this week, "we had not even a single difference of opinion."

Commenting on the three Iranian islands in the Persian Gulf, he was quoted as saying that the difference could be resolved only through mutual negotiation between Iran and the UAE on the basis of good neighbourly ties and common beliefs. Iran's first vice-president rejected any link between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the unrest rocking Bahrain, and stressed that Tehran has no interest in having difference with Bahrain.

On the impacts of the US economic sanctions against Iran, he said Iran has successfully weathered the impact of the US trade embargo, and at present Iran's oil exports are fetching dlrs. one billion more than before, while its non-oil exports have increased by dlrs. 4 billion.

Habibi visited Syria last Tuesday and Wednesday along with Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, and held important talks with senior Syrian officials including President al-Asad.

Lebanon: Iran's Habibi on Ties With Syria, Gulf, Oil Exports

NC0103175496 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1500 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Beirut, 1 Mar (MENA) — Iranian Vice President Dr. Hasan Habibi has affirmed that the understanding between the Iranian and Syrian leaders is solid and profound. He said that there is not a single point of dispute between the two countries on the issue of negotations with Israel or relations with the United States.

In statements published by Lebanese newspaper AL-SAFIR today, Habibi said that the issue of the dispute with the United Arab Emirates [UAE] should be withdrawn from [the agendas of] the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Damascus Declaration so that it can be treated bilaterally and calmly in order to protect the common interests of the two countries.

In answering a question about the charges accusing Iran of interferring in the domestic affairs of Bahrain, the Iranian vice president said that his country has nothing to do with the events in Bahrain because it is an internal problem. Habibi added that Iran has invited a number of leaders and officials in friendly countries to witness the inauguration of the new railroad that will link the east [al-mashriq] with China across countries that were part of the former Soviet Union. This route was known as the Silk Road, he added.

The Iranian official said that the new railroad will promote transportation, communication, and exchange of products between Syria and China via Turkey, Iran, Turkmenistan, and Russia. Habibi maintained that his country has overcome the effects of the economic pressure and the U.S. embargo, adding that Iran's oil exports have exceeded $1 billion, while its other exports have exceeded $4 billion.

Lebanon: Israeli Military Operations in South Reported

NC0603083596 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Zionist occupation forces continued attacks on the liberated areas in the south throughout the night, our correspondent in the south, Hassan Haydar, tells us.

[Begin Haydar recording] The Zionist enemy forces continued their attacks on al-Nabatiyah and Iqlim al-Tuffah until the early hours of this morning. At 0600 this morning the enemy forces, from their positions in Tall al-Suwayda' and Sujud, raked the outskirts of [name indistinct], the Nab' al-Tasi basin, the heights around

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[name indistinct], and al-Jabal al-Rafi'. Just before midnight the enemy artillery intermittently shelled the towns of Sujud, Luwayzah, Nab' al-Tasi basin, the hills of [name indistinct], and the outskirts of Habbush and Jarju' for about an hour. Mazra'at al-Hamra' and the outskirts of Yuhmur came under similar shelling at 2200 last night.

Zionist warplanes intensified reconnaissance flights over the south. For the first time enemy planes flew flamboyant sorties in formations of four.

Al-Nabatiyah, Hassan Haydar, Voice of the Oppressed. [end recording]

The Islamic Resistance has relayed the good news to its masses about the martyrdom of Mujahid Husayn 'Anif Ayyub Rabi', who was martyred in a heroic Islamic Resistance operation on the Hula- Markaba road. The martyr was born in the town of Sal'ah in 1972 and joined the Resistance ranks in 1992. He received military training and took part in many Resistance operations. The heroic operation killed four Zionist soldiers, among them a colonel, and wounded nine.

Lebanon: Amal Groups Claim Attacks Against 'Occupation' Troops

NC0503181996 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Amal today announced that on the 11th anniversary of the bombing of the mosque in the village of Ma'rakah by the occupation troops, Amal groups have launched a series of attacks against the occupation troops' positions in the central sector. As a result, several enemy personnel were either killed or wounded.

Lebanon: Israeli Shelling, Overflights Reported in South

NC0503150196 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1400 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Hima Arnun and the outskirts of Kafr Tibnit in the south are coming under artillery fire from the [Israeli] occupation positions. Enemy warplanes broke the sound barrier during flights over the area.

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Syria: Habibi, Syrian Vice President Hail 'Close Relations'

LD0403115396 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 29 Feb 96 p 2

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, in a meeting on Tuesday [27 February] with Iranian Vice-President Hasan Habibi, remarked that close relations between Iran and Syria is a main pillar of the Islamic resistance against Zionist plots.

The Iranian Vice President, in return, assured Syrian officials that the Islamic Republic of Iran will be a perpetual ally of Syria in its struggle against the ambitions of the Zionist regime.

And, no less than Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, in talks with Habibi, assured the latter that Syria will remain firm in its stand pertaining to issues covered by the Middle East peace talks.

The postponement of Habibi's visit to Damascus a couple of weeks ago was seized by the Western media as an opportunity to open gaps in Syria and Iran's tested alliance on issues both countries regard as crucial to the success of the Middle East peace. The fact that Habibi pushed through with his visit, albeit a bit delayed, not only disappointed the U.S. but proved once again that the friendship of strategic allies is not one that can easily be destroyed at the slightest opportunity.

Tehran-Damascus close and brotherly ties is not only inevitable for two countries sharing similar values, but indispensable to the success of the Islamic movement in the region as well. The strength of the alliance is such that, although Yasir 'Arafat has been reduced to an Israeli surrogate, the anti-Zionist Islamic movement marches on without showing the slightest weakening.

Tehran and Damascus both value their close cooperation and are committed to preserve it till the victory of the Islamic movement. The betrayal by one man has only strengthened the alliance of Iran and Syria, as the betrayal of Judas made possible the martyrdom of Jesus.

The Palestinian cause is a sacred cause for all Muslims around the world, and for countries to subordinate it to political expediency would be a historical blunder. For Iran and Syria, there can be no compromise on their solidarity in support of this cause. As Israel becomes more and more entrenched in compromises with naive Arab countries in the region, Iran-Syrian close relations will undergo more tests to their enduring solidarity. "Now is not the time to falter." Victory is at hand.

Syria: Iran's Habibi on Achievements, Ties With Neighbors

NC0403163296 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 1 Mar 96 p 15

[Interview with First Iranian Vice President Hasan Habibi by Talal Salman in Damascus; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Salman] The first question is about Iran at this moment: basically its economic situation, its foreign debts, the deterioration in its currency value (the Tuman), the imposed U.S. siege, and the turbulence in relations with neighboring Arab and Islamic countries, from Bahrain to the United Arab Emirates [UAE] and from Iraq to Turkey and to the Islamic countries in the former Soviet Union.

[Habibi] You know quite well that Iran is the biggest dam preventing the spread of U.S. policy in the region. Both friends and enemies know that Iran has an independent policy. We do not receive instructions from any foreign quarters. Our people in Iran are totally opposed to the U.S. policy and the Americans know this very well.

We had vast financial resources at the beginning of the revolution. We would have achieved a lot had we been allowed to implement the economic projects we had decided on after the revolution, which would have achieved social justice. Iran's population at that time was 35 million only and now we are around 60 million. The United States confronted us from the first year of the revolution with two military operations to deal a blow to the revolution in its cradle. The objective in both operations was to replace the current leadership with the "liberals." In the first operation, U.S. helicopters took off from vessels anchored in the Gulf in an attempt to bring about a coup in Iran. As you recall, the planes landed in "Tabas." The operation was similar to what happened at Entebbe airport. But the U.S. operation did not succeed, the planes were brought down and burned along with their occupants.

Washington then wanted to bring about another military coup in Iran from one of the military bases and with the help of officers from the Shah's regime. It did not succeed. When their plans failed, they resorted to attempts to sow sedition and splits between the revolutionary government and some political groups. They wanted fighting in the streets so as to paint a bad picture of us.

I do not want to refer here to the explosion they detonated in the cabinet building and the Republican Party headquarters that claimed the lives of some of the best young revolutionary leaders. Then came the eight-year war imposed on us, which exhausted our resources.

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We were forced to use our resources and capabilities in the confrontation instead of beginning development. The Islamic Republic of Iran has overcome all the obstacles and we have started the policy of building and development. We have achieved the first five year plan based on two programs: rebuilding the destroyed areas and economic reform.

Iran lost a trillion dollars in the imposed war. International experts say that Iran lost $100 billion. We are not here to detail the figures but this notes the extent of losses. Five governorates and all their cities were destroyed. At the same time, we received more than 2 million Afghan refugees during and after the war there and more than a million Iraqi refugees following the second war. Additionally, we had to face earthquakes and bear additional losses. Yet we still achieved 85 percent of the first five year plan while continuing to repair many of the factories, buildings, and facilities and to build new dams.

We suffered from electricity shortages. We do not have this problem now at all. We are also in control of the water so that it is not squandered. Control of water has been achieved three times in Iran's history:

1. Under the Sassanids before Islam.
2. During the 3d Islamic century under 'Adad-al-Dawlah.
3. Currently, when we are building 100 dams.

This year alone, the budget called for building 12 dams. We expect to complete them within two years, that is one dam every two months. We then raised the figure to 20 dams after the budget was given. I personally added another one to make it 21 dams.

As for education, there were 176,000 university students after the revolution victory. I was the education minister then. The figure this year has reached 1.4 million students in the universities. We brought about a change in the educational system before eight years passed. We had 13,000 specialist doctors and now have a plan that could increase the figure in the next five years to 50,000 doctors. Now, 3,700 students enter the college of medicine every year. We used to benefit from the services of doctors from (Bangladesh, Pakistan, and India) several years ago. These doctors have now returned to their countries. We have 18 million students at all levels of education. Briefly, 98.5 percent of Iranian children of both sexes under the age of seven have entered schools. This was not the case in the past because female students were deprived of schooling.

Concerning telephone lines, Iran has witnessed a remarkable and unique development. We are introducing 1 million telephone lines annually. Six years ago we produced 800,000 tons of steel annually. This year we will produce 5 million tons. At the end of the second five-year plan, production will reach 10 million tons of steel. Regarding gold, a famous prince discovered a gold mine 150 years ago. We are now extracting gold from that mine. We are also manufacturing [tasni'] oil refineries in our country and installing petrochemical plants with Iranian manpower, expertise, and equipment.

In the new budget we have earmarked funds for the construction of 2,000 km of railroads, 1,000 km of which will be completed this year. We are also increasing the number of cement factories. The brother Syrians have asked us to build a cement factory in Syria. We will provide them with railroad cars for the transport of cement and grain. We will also provide them with oil tanker trucks. Six years ago we used to produce 7 million tons of grain. This year we will produce 11 million tons. We will stop importing grain within two years.

Several years ago, when we started working under the government of his excellency Rafsanjani, we obtained the approval of the Majles to seek foreign loans. We borrowed short-term loans from abroad. One and a half year ago we faced the problem of repaying these loans. This was not a big deal from the international economic standpoint, because these loans did not exceed $15 million. However, for political reasons some media services launched a harsh campaign against us to dissuade the donor nations from giving us loans and to stop the guarantees for these loans.

We suffered for six months from this problem. Matters have now returned to normal after the donor nations realized that this campaign was politically instigated. First Germany agreed to reschedule our loans. Other states, including France and Italy, followed suit. The United States then strongly intervened and put pressure on the German leaders at the G-7 summits in Japan and Canada.

We paid the installments on these loans last year, according to agreement. The states which withheld the guarantees resumed giving them.

According to the data centers of the world's central banks, Iran has a substantial amount of hard currencies. Besides paying our debts and paying for imported grain, we have a currency reserve greater than we used to think.

In the past, we used to allocate 30 percent of our budget for reconstruction projects. We are now allocating 50 percent of the budget for reconstruction. This year we will create 140,000 new job opportunities.

[Salman] Is there unemployment?

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[Habibi] The number of unemployed is between 700,000 and 800,000 persons. We have no problem in settling debts. We do not have problems in this regard. All the donor states know that we pay our debts. Next year the repayment installments will become less. In addition, we will earn more hard currency from oil royalties. We have entered the market directly and found new customers. We are no longer in need of middlemen in the oil market.

Last year oil royalties increased by approximately $1 billion. We have connected the country with a new railroad linked to the networks of Europe and China. Several years ago our non-oil exports were $500 million. Last year they reached $4 billion. From our point of view, this figure is small and we expect it to increase.

[Salman] Thank you for this review. Your presidential program is ready.

[Habibi] [smiling] The matter is as you say. The president of the republic and the nation is not facing difficulties and he has to continue on the same road.

[Salman] You are the vice president and it is easy to follow the implementation of the president's program, specially as the second five year plan sets out the course.

[Habibi] I was only speaking in general terms and on behalf of all the candidates. I did not mean myself.

[Salman] Moving to the issue of your neighbors. Where will your crisis with the UAE end? It gets quiet at times and the belief prevails that a settlement is on the horizon. Statements then become fiery and the issue returns to the forefront. Is there not a bold initiative from your side to resolve this problem that is causing a lot of complications between the Arabs in general and Iran?

[Habibi] We did not in fact have a desire to raise this issue outside its normal context, because the problem is between two friendly and neighborly countries. Such a problem is resolved bilaterally and through understanding. There are parties that want to internationalize it. We believe that this issue can be solved bilaterally. You expect boldness? Is it courageous, for example, for a man to throw himself from the tenth floor? That would be recklessness. But we are eager to resolve this problem with the UAE on the basis of partnership in religion, good neighborliness, and joint interests.

The best way for solving this problem is to take it out of the context of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] statements and the meetings of the Damascus Declaration countries—to keep the issue between us and the UAE in our capacity as two adult and rational countries. What could the other countries do for us or for the UAE? When we issued statements, we were replying to what we were hearing from the media. We did not start the talk about this issue. The problem can be solved cordially with the UAE if others do not interfere.

[Salman] This leads us to the severe criticisms of Syria published in some Tehran papers. The pretext was a clause in the Damascus Declaration countries' statement that spoke about the UAE's right to the islands. No one believes that this pretext justifies this campaign. Your presence in Damascus now shows that the crisis was transient. Has clarity returned to these relations?

—The Iranian vice president replied by quoting the first verse of the following Arabic poem:

What is past is past, what will come is unknown;

So stand up and seize the chance between the two nothings.

[Habibi continues] We did not have any problem with Syria and there are none with it now. These GCC meetings are held periodically and, as you said, each time a statement is issued. But the Syrian media usually did not publish the parts about the dispute with the UAE. But the last time, AL-BA'TH and other media organs published this part and gave it more prominence than it warrants. This elicited a reaction from some journalists.

[Salman] As a professional journalist, I have not seen in these articles personal views, but an expression of an official stand?

[Habibi] You are professional journalists and we are professional politicians. We have not asked the newspapers to tackle this subject in this way. My scheduled visit to Damascus was postponed for purely domestic reasons. Some concluded that there was a serious crisis in relations between us and Syria.

In any event, regarding our strong relations with Syria, I say that we are aware of Syria's stance on Middle East issues. We do want to interfere and we do not find a need to interfere. All that happened is that we declared our expectations. We do not expect that these talks will lead to a full, comprehensive, and just peace.

Syria has stated that it has not obtained results from the peace talks. We have stated, according to our expectations, that this course of negotiations will not lead to a just peace. For instance, we might expect that the temperature tomorrow will be 5 degrees Centigrade. This could happen or not. Our talk is based on expectation. Why are we being held accountable because we are predicting the weather.

[Salman] You seem more flexible with countries in a rush to surrender to Israel, such as Jordan and Morocco?

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[Habibi] What is your proof of our inflexibility with Syria?

[Salman] I have not said that you are being inflexible with the Syrians. I have said that you are being flexible with others.

[Habibi] What the newspapers have stated is non-official.

[Salman] Is it not a stand?

[Habibi] We do not have an official stand and a non-official stand.

[Salman] Well then, what is your official stance on the Syrian- Israeli talks?

[Habibi] We are aware of Syria's official stance. We do not want to interfere in this regard. The current course of events will not lead to the results that some expect shortly.

I tell you sincerely that when we meet with the Syrian brothers— and last night we met with his excellency President Hafiz al-Asad for three hours—we do not disagree on a single letter. We do not find anything to disagree about.

We discussed bilateral relations and regional problems in Iraq and Palestine. When I do not mention the details of what President Hafiz al-Asad has said, this is because I do not want to refer to something which is their prerogative. They [the Syrians] are the ones who define and declare their stances and formulas. What I can affirm is that we have never disagreed with President Hafiz al-Asad on a single point. We have never objected to Syria holding negotiations [with Israel].

[Salman] What about Bahrain, which is accusing you of playing a part in the recent events there.

[Habibi] Our official viewpoint is that many quarters have leveled serious accusations against us, accusations which are devoid of any proof. We have no connection with events in Bahrain either directly or indirectly. In fact, we do not want to have a problem with Bahrain.

[Salman] Thank you, Mr. Vice President.

[Habibi] Thank you, too.

Syria: Commentary—No Security Without Just, Comprehensive Peace

JN0503153896 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 5 Mar 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: Syria has continued to be faithful to its positions declared since the launching of the U.S. peace initiative. It welcomed efforts aimed to bring about a just and comprehensive peace that restores land and rights to their owners and removes occupation and all manifestations of suppression, repression, and displacement of people. Since the inception of the peace process, Syria urged the Arab parties to adopt a unified position and adhere to constant coordination and consultations. This was prompted by its faith that the strength of Arabs lies in their unity and that the nations's aspirations cannot be realized amid fragmentation and disunity.

On every occasion, Syria warned against the dangers inherent in involvement in unilateral positions that are far removed from the resolutions of international legitimacy, which prohibits the occupation of the lands of others and demands Israel to withdraw its troops to 4 June 1967 lines and not to mess with the features, character, and history of the occupied Arab lands.

Syria devoted all its capabilities to serve the brothers based on its keenness on the nation's interests, security and stability, and respect for the rights and dignity of all in accordance with the international law and the resolutions.

Despite the peace efforts, which started almost five years ago, peace has not been accomplished. Without peace, security cannot be achieved. A just and comprehensive peace which returns rights to their owners is the sure guarantee for security, because peace in the final analysis is that of people. People which see that their rights are usurped, their will confiscated, and their lands occupied will never succumb to humiliating realities. They will continue to defend their existence and right to a free and decent life.

The U.S. initiative proceeded from the resolutions of international legitimacy, the land-for-peace principle, and the need to establish a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East— peace that will put an end to long decades of pain, suffering, and wars. Syria responded [to the U.S. initiative] with full honesty and sense of responsibility. It salvaged the peace process from collapse more than once. Had the other party responded favorably to the call for a just and comprehensive peace — as Syria has done — and abided by the resolutions of intentional legitimacy, peace would have now become a salient fact in the region and security would have prevailed.

If the peace process is now in danger, then ridding it of the dilemma will be through going back to the foundations, resolutions, and principles from which it proceeded, and not through evasion. In a bitter conflict, like the Arab-Israeli one, there is no alternative to a terms of reference on which the solution should be based. The international terms of reference is the basic thing.

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All countries adhere to the Security Council's resolutions and the UN principles and charters. All crises that plagued the world were resolved through resorting to the international legitimacy. Syria announced on every occasion that it adheres to the peace of international legitimacy and its requirements.

As it waits for Israel to overcome the crisis of explosions and resume peace talks, Syria will remain true to its stand and pledge, have faith in peace, and seek to achieve it. Syria asserts that a just and comprehensive peace is the only formula that will bring about security, safety, and stability. A just and comprehensive peace requires the implementation of the Security Council resolutions, which call for a complete Israeli withdrawal, returning the occupied territories, and respecting Arab rights.

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Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Radio Reports Cease-Fire Declared in North

LD0503131496 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A cease-fire has been declared between the warring sides in northern Afghanistan after a week of fierce fighting and clashes. Hundreds of residents of this region of Afghanistan lost their lives during the recent clashes and dozens were injured. The clashes took place between factions that are opposed to the government of Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani. Hundreds of people from the town of Pol-e Khomri in northern Afghanistan have fled their homes because of the clashes.

The fighting in northern Afghanistan began after the murder of a senior commander of one of the groups opposed to the Rabbani government.

Afghanistan: Faction Relations in Northern Province Said Friendly

LD0503152296 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In an interview with Radio Message of Freedom, Bashir Khan, a Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] military official in Baghlan [Province], said that relations between Hezb-e Eslami forces and Jonbesh-e Melli are friendly as in the past. He said: The situation has been calm in Baghlan Province over the past three days. A High Coordination Council [HCC] delegation arrived in Baghlan to begin peace talks. The talks are continuing, but our mojahedin remain on full alert.

Lieutenant-General Bashir Khan said: There are many reasons for the recent fighting but the most important one is the deeds of the Sayd Kayan group. They provoke fighting, ignore other groups' rights, and seek its [words indistinct] in Baghlan. He added: In the north relations between Hezb-e Eslami, Hezb-e Wahdat [Unity Party], and Jonbesh-e Melli are, as in the past, friendly. There are no problems between them. He warned: If the HCC member parties do not settle the matter in a just, fair, and resolute manner the situation in Baghlan can deteriorate further.

Afghanistan: Faction Leaders Agree to Investigation of Commanders' Death

LD0503151496 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Brother Hekmatyar, the religious leader [amir] of Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] Afghanistan, and General 'Abdol Rashid Dostum, leader of Jonbesh-e Melli, agreed to an enquiry into the killing of [Hezb-e Eslami] commanders Mohammad Ghayur and Haji Nawab, said a spokesman of Hezb-e Eslami. He said: The High Coordination Council [HCC] recently appointed a committee to investigate the killing of Mohammad Ghayur and Haji Nawab. The spokesman said: Officials of the Kayani units have been asked to hand over the assassins to the committee for trial by the HCC judiciary committee.

Afghanistan: Faction's Talks With Government Not on Behalf of HCC

LD0503194196 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Pashto 1230 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The High Coordination Council [HCC] welcomed talks between the Afghan Government and Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami held in the Pakistani city of Peshawar on 4 March. Dr. Taleb, HCC spokesman, told an IRNA correspondent that the members of the council preferred talks on resolving the problem of the fighting in Afghanistan. The HCC is a formation of four opposition parties of Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami, Mojaddedi's Jabha-ye Meli, General Dostam's Jonbesh-e Melli, and Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami. Over the past three weeks, Hezb-e Eslami has held a series of talks with government representatives on a coalition for running the country jointly and for resolving the differences between them. It is believed that the talks went very well. Rejecting the reports that the HCC was against those talks, Dr. Taleb said: Any party or group can hold talks with other parties; however, the Hezb-e Eslami talks were not conducted on behalf of the HCC.

Afghanistan: Rabbani Visit to Iran Said To Help Bring Peace to Country

LD0403221796 Tehran IRNA in English 2153 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, Mar 4, IRNA — 'BAKHTARAN', Afghan news agency in its comment said here Monday that the official two-day visit of Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani to Tehran will help bring peace to his country and reduce tension in the region.

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The agency pointed out that vast economic potentials and indesputable influence of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the international arena if properly employed can contribute towards bringing the crisis to an end and the prevelance of peace in Afghanistan.

'BAKHTARAN' further went on to deduce that Afghani nation is of the belief that superb relations between Iran and Afghanistan is the result of Iran's pure humanitarian intentions without that country having any special motives behind it, can help preserve the interests of the two peoples.

On relation with Pakistan, the agency hinted on following Iran as an example to bring about brotherly relations between the neighboring countries based on mutual interest and non-interference in the internal affairs of each other.

The news agency went on to say that the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran had been fully active in the most trying time of the history of Afghanistan and at the peak of crisis. It added that Iran has focused all its power in trying to strengthen its relations with Afghan brethren.

'BAKHTARAN' then indicated that Iran has also concentrated on bringing the civil war to an end, in addition to mediating between Pakistan and Afghanistan in order to bring about an improvement of relations between the two countries.

It stressed on the Tehran meeting as an example of Iran's neutrality and pure intention in its effort to bring about a peace settlement in Afghanistan.

The news agency finally states that Iran and Afghanistan share common views on ending the war and foreign interference in Afghanistan.

Borhanoddin Rabbani heading a top delegation arrived in Tehran on Sunday afternoon on a two-day official visit. He was seen off at the airport Monday evening by President Hojjat ol-eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani and other top officials.

Afghanistan: Pakistani Road Project Through Afghanistan Criticized

LD0503203896 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1600 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] According to reports from foreign sources, the Pakistani Government is planning to open — illegally and against international norms — the Pakistan-Turkmenistan highway through Afghan territory which has been named [word indistinct].

The Afghan government authorities condemn the opening of the Pakistani project which is carried out in collaboration with their agents, i.e. the Taleban, and once again holds Pakistan responsible for its interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

Afghanistan has exposed the identity of the Taleban at the UN General Assembly and considers this act to be Pakistan's latest attempt [word indistinct] to implement its aim, which is to enable the Taleban to seize power [words indistinct]. The Islamic State of Afghanistan demands from other countries, and the United Nations, that they warn Pakistan against its interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, and eventually prevent it from pursuing this course of action.

Afghanistan: Paper Cited on U.S. Prevention of Pipeline Construction

LD0503202696 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1230 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul's DARIZ newspaper has written that an American company prevented the construction of a pipeline via Afghanistan which was to transfer natural gas from Turkmenistan to Pakistan. According to a report by IRNA from Kabul, the DARIZ newspaper has not given the name of the company or its reasons for opposing the plan. It is to be said that an Argentinian company by the name of Bridas Energy Limited had undertaken the implementation of the plan after signing contracts with the Governments of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Turkmenistan.

The agreement was originally signed by Turkmenistan and Pakistan in 1995, and at the end of February 1996 the Argentinian company signed an agreement with the Afghan Government on the implementation of the plan as well as the sale of Afghan natural gas through the pipeline and transit and customs rights. It was planned that under the agreement natural gas from Turkmenistan would be sent to Pakistan with a 30-year right of transit and some other facilities through Afghanistan.

Afghanistan: Rabbani Appoints Acting Prime Minister as Acting President

LD0503151196 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1430 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In line with a decree issued by esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani, the president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, who is currently visiting a number of countries, esteemed Ahmad Shah Ahmadzai, the acting prime minister, will be the acting president of the Islamic state in his absence.

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Afghanistan: Kabul Subjected to Rocket Attacks 4-5 Mar

LD0503174196 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1430 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Overnight and today residential areas of Kabul were hit by 17 rockets. BAKHTAR reported that Benazir Bhutto's Taleban fired 17 rockets into residential areas of Kabul overnight and this morning. As a result, two of our compatriots were martyred. Yesterday evening four of our compatriots were martyred and a number of others injured when a rocket landed in the city's Macrorayon 3 area.

India

India: Foreign Ministry Condemns Israeli Bombings, Supports Peace

BK0603125296 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India has strongly condemned the recent bomb blasts in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. Calling for concerted international action against terrorism, New Delhi has reiterated its full support for the sincere efforts being made by the PLO president, Mr. Yasir 'Arafat, and the Palestinian people to confront the menace. A spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry said in New Delhi that India believes that the West Asia peace process has entered an irreversible phase.

India: Two Joint Venture Agreements Signed With Bhutan

BK0503163296 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India and Bhutan have signed agreements for development of the Tala hydroelectric project and the (Dung Song) cement plant in Bhutan as joint ventures between the two countries. The agreements were signed following a meeting between the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao, and the visiting king of Bhutan, Jigme Singye Wangchuk. The two countries have also announced their decision to initiate talks on bilateral extradition arrangements. The issue of extending a standby credit to Bhutan by India for a further period of three years also came up for discussion.

The home minister, Mr. S.B. Chavan, met the Bhutanese king, Jigme Singye Wangchuk, at Rashtrapati Bhavan [President House] today. The two leaders discussed matters of mutual interest and the meeting was cordial. The Bhutanese king is on a four-day official visit to India.

India: High-Level Officials Reportedly Involved in Defense Scandal

BK0603131796 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 28 Feb 96 p 1

[Report by Avinash Singh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] NEW DELHI, Feb 27 — The Central Bureau of Investigation [CBI] is all set to blow the lid off another sensational scam — a defense scandal that may involve a few serving and retired defense officers and bureaucrats. The charges are as serious as brokering arms deals during their foreign postings on behalf of the factions fighting with each other in Afghanistan and in erstwhile Yugoslavia.

The CBI is being assisted by the Intelligence Bureau and other central agencies which are also investigating the role of a senior politician, already under a cloud for his alleged links with the underworld, for having denotified defense land in a prime cantonment area and in some of defense deals with Russia and other countries when he was heading the Ministry of Defense [MOD].

A senior CBI official when contacted said the move was part of widening the dragnet against corruption. "We have chanced upon some documentary evidence against a few Defense officers who, while serving as military advisors and military attaches in Indian missions abroad with the active help or connivance of some Secretary-level officials, had clinched arms deals for those involved in the faction war in Afghanistan and the civil war in the Balkan States of Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia."

While the CBI source refused to confirm that the politician in question was Mr Sharad Pawar, a close associate of the latter said, if it was true it was another "masterstroke of the wily old man (Mr Narasimha Rao) to neutralise all those who were opposing his dictatorial policies.

"There is no truth whatsoever in the charges being made against him (Mr Pawar)," the aide said without denying that the former defense minister had been questioned by the CBI in this regard. He termed it as "an attempt by Mr Rao to kill his own party and collude with BJP-RSS [Bharatiya Janata Party-Rashtriya Shiv Sena] like forces to retain his own chair." Mr Pawar himself was not available for comments.

The chargesheets being prepared against the defense officers and bureaucrats make interesting reading: "These officers were acting on behalf of the arms cartels for arranging covert supply of arms, ammunition and even artillery equipment to the warring factions on hefty commission."

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The CBI sources explained that these officials had worked out a deal last year for the supply of blankets, arms, ammunition and other defenseware of Czech, Polish and Romanian origin through Algeria to a section of the Afghan rebels.

The racket is believed to have come to light recently when a few defense personnel were nabbed while trying to sell off-the-shelf ammunition, bullet-proof jackets, night vision devices, armour plating (material used for bullet proofing of vehicles of different types) in league with a few senior bureaucrats.

As a result of the interrogation of the "elements nabbed", half-a dozen serving officials of the MOD, some bureaucrats including those belonging to the Ministry of External Affairs [MEA] at whose behest the former had acted as go-between for some of the "most embarrassing underhand defense deals" are under a cloud. "Some recently retired Government servants too figured in the murky deal", one source said.

The kickbacks, the CBI sources said, might not be of the magnitude of Bofors and HDW submarine deals but yet they were substantial. "More than that, the covert dealings became a cause of great deal of discomfiture to the Government".

The CBI's investigations, for which it had also asked for the help of Military Intelligence, have already left many red faces in both the MOD and MEA. Once the chargesheet is ready, the matter may not remain under cover for long, even if there have been requests for in-camera trials for the erring Defense officials.

The CBI would prefer an open trial because in cases of attempts to sell defenseware lying in ordnance depots and defense stores, the actions tantamount to compromising the security and integrity of the country.

India: Editorial Notes Moves To Form 'Third Front' Before Election

BK0503143196 Varanasi AJ in Hindi 22 Feb 96 p 6

[Editorial: "Lalu-Mulayam Talks"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The unannounced visit to Lucknow by Lalu Prasad Yadav, the Bihar chief minister and national president of the Janata Dal, and his secret talks with Mulayam Singh Yadav, the former chief minister of Uttar Pradesh and national president of the Samajwadi Party [SP], was not without reason. Soon after Lalu Prasad Yadav took over command of Janata Dal, efforts began to eliminate the differences between the SP and the Bahujan Samaj Party [BSP] to create conditions under which a non-Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] and non-Congress-I third force comprising the SP, BSP, and communist parties could be created — a third force that should be so cohesive and strong that it can be the only alliance to form a government at the center.

A strange situation had arisen earlier under which BSP leader Kanshi Ram and Mulayam Singh Yadav were never seen together on the same stage. Lalu Prasad Yadav held several rounds of talks with Kanshi Ram to try to persuade him to take over the chairmanship of the National Front, but Kanshi Ram rejected the idea, saying there is nothing left of the National Front except the Janata Dal. On the other hand, Mulayam Singh Yadav had openly refused to shake hands with Kanshi Ram.

Lalu Prasad Yadav then announced that a meeting would be held in New Delhi on 20 February to discuss and resolve this situation; surprisingly, however, Lalu Prasad flew into Lucknow on the same date. It is a well-known fact that Lalu Prasad and Mulayam Singh differ on the issue of the inclusion of the BSP in the third force. Lalu Prasad wants to move together with the BSP, while Mulayam Singh wants the BSP to be left alone. Leaders like Ram Vilas Paswan have also been pressuring for a compromise. In the meantime, Kanshi Ram has set some strange conditions that are not acceptable to anyone.

It was in this context that Lalu Prasad and Mulayam Singh Yadav held a one-hour and a 30-minute long closed-door meeting in Lucknow. The main purpose of their parleys was to finalize the distribution of the Lok Sabha seats in Uttar Pradesh. There are 85 Lok Sabha seats in Uttar Pradesh, and the third front or force wants to grab all these seats at all costs.

Mulayam Singh Yadav has divulged some details of his secret talks with Lalu Prasad Yadav. According to Mulayam Singh Yadav, the Janata Dal and the Samajwadi Party have agreed to jointly contest the Lok Sabha elections from Uttar Pradesh. Previously, senior Janata Dal leaders had decided that they were ready to forge an alliance with the Samajwadi Party, even if they had to leave aside the BSP. From the election point of view, the SP is more important than the BSP in Uttar Pradesh. Janata Dal leaders understand that the BSP has its own popular base in Uttar Pradesh, but Mulayam Singh Yadav has dented the BSP support base in the state to such an extent that BSP supremo Kanshi Ram is now not in a position to contest and win the election from any Lok Sabha constituency in Uttar Pradesh.

Kanshi Ram may not remember, but it is true that it was Mulayam Singh Yadav who helped Kanshi Ram win a Lok Sabha seat for the first time. Kanshi Ram would not have reached the Lok Sabha, if Mulayam Singh had not created a favorable atmosphere in Etawa. Now, by holding a rally in the Etawa constituency, Mulayam Singh Yadav has weakened Kanshi Ram's position, and

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the latter cannot win election from this constituency. That is why Kanshi Ram has now decided to contest the Lok Sabha elections from Hoshiarpur in Punjab.

The question of including the BSP in the third front was raised during the Lalu-Mulayam Lucknow tete-a-tete. Mulayam Singh Yadav's attitude toward the BSP is still not clear because very few leaders had the prior knowledge of Lalu Prasad's dash from Patna to Lucknow before going to Delhi. The talks between Lalu Prasad and Mulayam Singh Yadav, however, have brightened the possibility of the emergence of a strong third front.

India: Editorial Urges Inquiry Into Kashmiri Leaders' Financial Status

BK0603111496 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 28 Feb 96 p 13

[Editorial: "Hurriyat Connection"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Now that several senior leaders of the All Party Hurriyat Conference in Kashmir have confirmed receipt of notices from the Union Home Ministry demanding to know details of the foreign contributions received by them, their earlier mention of fears of being "implicated" in the hawala [illegal money transfer] racket are easier to explain. It is possible that by invoking the fearful image of the enlarging web of the hawala racket, these leaders might have hoped to create the impression that the move was politically motivated, thus seeking to undermine the credibility of the Government's action. The militant groups in Kashmir, who have been sustained by a regular inflow of foreign mercenaries, sophisticated weapons and provision of training facilities, would certainly not have been denied monetary support. Quite a few among the militant groups and leaders, even as they preached secession in the Valley, were known to have acquired during the past six years huge properties in major Indian cities such as Delhi, Bombay and Bangalore — besides, of course, Srinagar. But all the same, it is important for the sake of its own credibility that the Government should not stop with asking these questions of the Hurriyat leaders alone. They should put the other Kashmir politicians (some of them belonging to the mainstream parties, who may not be the totally untainted by foreign money) under similar scrutiny. This would be a positive measure in cleaning the Augean Stables of Kashmir polity where political bribery has been a fine art long before anybody had heard of the word hawala.

It is worth recalling that it was the leads yielded by a Kashmiri militant contact in the first place that had led to the discovery of the infamous Jain diaries. The flow of foreign money to finance subversive activities in Jammu and Kashmir is not a recent phenomenon. But it had picked up particularly after the mid- eighties. The Government's own intelligence agencies were in the know of much of what had been happening. What is amazing in all this is that it should have taken the Union Home Ministry six years of full-blown militancy in Kashmir to ask these simple questions of the Hurriyat leaders. On the face of it, this might look like a case of administrative incompetence. There could be more to it than just that. Agencies that encourage subversive activities are known to use financial conduits that are less formal and harder to identify. That is what the North Block [Finance Ministry] needs to look into next.

Iran

Iran: Tehran 'Denies Any Link' to Israel Bombings

LD0503210496 Tehran IRNA in English 2049 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 5, IRNA — "Acts of violence against innocent people, irrespective of the victim or the culprit, cannot and should not be condoned, and all selective and self-serving approaches to this international menace should be abandoned," said Iran's deputy foreign minister for international and legal affairs, Dr. Mohammad Javad Zarif here today.

Reacting to allegations by the United States on Iran's support for international terrorism, Zarif told IRNA that "Iran is a major victim of international terrorism and has always called for a serious international effort to combat this problem at its roots."

In response to recent allegations by Israeli officials on Iranian involvement in recent bombings there, he said: "Iran categorically rejects such baseless and absurd fabrications. Iran has nothing, whatsoever, to do with problems in Israel."

Zarif noted that "it has become a habit of Israeli officials to blame others for problems and crises which are in fact the consequences of their past and present policies and behaviour. But Israel has never produced any evidence to substantiate its claims."

He added that "the abuse and exploitation of international apprehensions and anxieties by Israeli officials to resolve or temporarily disguise their domestic problems and unacceptable international behaviour is a matter of common knowledge and public disrepute, and must not be taken at face value by serious individuals and governments."

Zarif reiterated: "Iran categorically denies any link with or involvement of any sort in these or similar incidents,

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and rejects in the strongest terms Israel's irresponsible and reckless accusations."

Iran: Foreign Ministry Denies Christopher's Accusations

LD0603121896 Tehran IRNA in English 1209 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 6, IRNA — Foreign Ministry spokesman Mahmoud Mohammadi on Wednesday categorically denied the "incalculated" statements and accusations raised by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in relation to recent incidents in occupied Palestine.

The incalculated accusations raised against Iran hurriedly and without producing any evidence by American and Israeli officials after every incident in the world, though their falsehood has always been proved to the world, is an attempt to divert world public opinion from realities and root-causes of their internal problems, he said.

Condemning such political and propagandistic ploys, the Foreign Ministry spokesman rejected Iran's involvement in recent incidents in occupied Palestine.

"The U.S. and the Zionist regime had better search the root- causes of their problems in their past deeds and present policies rather than attributing them to others," Mohammadi advised.

Iran: UN Mission Rejects U.S. Allegations on Events in Palestine

LD0603100896 Tehran IRNA in English 0747 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] United Nations, New York, March 6, IRNA — The permanent mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the U.N., in a press release issued here Tuesday strongly rejected allegations concerning Iranian involvement of any sort in the recent incidents in Palestine.

"Today, the United States secretary of state echoed the very same baseless allegations which the Israeli officials had earlier levelled against Iran in connection with the recent incidents in Palestine," said the press release.

While rejecting the allegations, the Iranian mission to the U.N. holds that such uncorroborated allegations by Warren Christopher are but reckless and an irresponsible manner of interstate conduct.

Iran has consistently denounced all acts of violence against innocent people irrespective of the nationality or beliefs of the victims or the perpetrators, the press release said adding, "this policy has been invariably stated and upheld by the highest officials in the Islamic Republic of Iran as a matter of unwavering principal."

However, it noted, the U.S. secretary of state finds it convenient to exploit the public sentiments created by the recent incidents to advance the ill-conceived and ill-fated u.s. policy of hostility toward Iran.

Under the current circumstances, the newly intensified allegations of an unfounded and purely speculative nature against Iran seem to point to an ulterior motive on the part of the United States and Israel.

"The permanent mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran believes that continuation of such propagandist policy against Iran cannot promote stability in the region and help to resolve the Middle East crisis," it concluded.

Iran: Daily Criticizes U.S. 'Disinformation Campaign' on Iran

LD0603105796 Tehran IRNA in English 0928 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 6, IRNA — A morning daily Wednesday editorialized on U.S. disinformation campaign against Iran saying, it decided to put Iran on a list of nations to be punished for failing to make adequate efforts to fight the war on drugs.

Referring to history of drug business, the English daily 'IRAN NEWS' added that Iran's anti-drug campaign focussed on two points: to stop drug smuggling and use inside the country, and to fight smugglers with helicopters since they are equipped with lethal weapons.

As to the problems faced by the Islamic Republic in its campaign against drugs, it stated that hundreds of young soldiers had to sacrifice their lives coupled with considerable economic and military loss to keep the youth of the West safe from drug peril.

Iran has had to introduce capital punishment for drug smugglers during the campaign which has all been done to save the West from drug menace, it stated adding, "ironically, this same culture is pointing a finger towards Iran in the name of human rights, rather than being thankful to the Islamic republic."

Therefore, the popular opinion in Iran is asking the government not to sacrifice human and material resources for the sake of a thankless West, it said concluding, the same opinion asks the government to draw a clear line between combating drug trafficking for the sake of Iran, or combating drug trafficking for the sake of an ungrateful West.

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Iran: Radio Assesses Impact of Bombs in Israel on Peace Process

LD0503175896 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 5 Mar 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] News of two consecutive explosions in Beyt ol-Moqaddas [Jerusalem] and in central Tel Aviv have captured headlines in Zionists' and Western mass media.

The explosion took place when the Palestinian Islamic Movement of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], after talks with so-called self-rule leaders, proposed to end the movement's martyrly operations. Elsewhere, conditions were brought up calling on the Zionist regime to free the Palestinian prisoners and stop Palestinians' persecutions in occupied regions in order to put an end to the current plight crippling the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

The Zionist's official turned downed the conditions, once again overlooking the Palestinian Muslims indisputable rights.

Political analysts believe the impacts of the recent explosion can be assessed within the occupied lands. In other words, the Zionist regime, at first, with an aim to put an end to the case of the Palestinians, had signed a self-rule accord with the PLO. However, the Zionists are presently faced with the fact that by no means can they pressure Palestinians with the ploy of autonomy.

Therefore, today, the Tel Aviv officials have pressured Yasir 'Arafat to counter the combat of the Palestinian nation, that is, what the Zionist administration has been unable to do and has been assigned upon to the PLO leaders to carry out.

But a blast at the heart of Tel Aviv is an issue that the Zionist regime cannot ignore that easily. There is no doubt at the threshold of early elections in the Zionist regime, Shi'mon Peres should be much pressured by the current events in the occupied Palestine.

At the moment [word indistinct] the Palestinians holding demonstrations against Peres have called for his resignation. And as new bombing take place in Tel Aviv more and more pressure exerted on Peres and inability of the Zionists leaders in hammering a solution to the peace process becomes ever more evidence.

Iran: U.S. 'Coercive Operations,' 'Terrorist Actions' Criticized

NC0503221596 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 22 Feb 96 p 16

[Political commentary: "An Anti-Terrorism Network, led by Terrorists!"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the city of Baguio in the Philippines, 128 delegates from 19 countries held a meeting to discuss ways and means of setting up an advanced network of international cooperation to combat terrorism. The United States and the Zionist regime constitute the pivot of this conference, and the issues propounded have been disseminated mostly in the news reports of circles affiliated to these two conference members.

In the wake of the establishment of the United States-Pakistan- Philippines triangle for the arrest of Ramzi Yusuf, a Pakistani citizen accused of involvement in the explosion of the World Trade Center in New York, the idea of convening such a conference was mentioned in Washington in order to boost international cooperation for combating international (!) terrorism by the United States.

As in the case of similar conferences, the conference in the Philippines also concluded with a general and cosmetic statement. However, Zionist and American circles sought to reap propagandist capital on the presence of some delegates of Muslim governments and regional states. Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, and even France and Russia sent representatives to the conference even though they are opposed to most of the definitions propounded by the United States and the Zionists. The Western circles sought to use the general atmosphere whipped up by attributing all the stances to the White House.

It is not known whether the participants in the above conference referred to the contradiction in the words and deeds of the policies of the main founders of the conference, that is, the United States and the Zionist regime. On the basis of the standard practice prevailing at such conferences, the answer to the above question would most certainly be negative. This is why the actual facts pertaining to international terrorism are overshadowed.

Washington and Tel Aviv plan and implement most of the terrorist actions in the various parts of the world and even now their black list includes names of various noble individuals who are campaigning for independence, negation of subservience, and colonialism. The assassinations of Fathi al-Shaqaqi and Yahya Ayyash are the latest examples of the Zionist regime's terrorism and all

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the leaders of the Resistance are also being pursued by the Mosad terrorists.

The United States, in conjunction with the centers of Zionist influence, caused an explosion in the Jewish center in Argentina and then sought to divert public attention by presenting unrealistic allegations and definitions of terrorism. The plan by U.S. House Speaker, Newt Gingrich, on the allocation of a $20 million budget for the CIA to carry out coercive operations against and to topple the Islamic Republic of Iran is a consummate example of international terrorism. Did anyone refer to that plan at the Philippines conference?

In the limited number of the examples of terrorism given above, a complete and practical definition of this political term is liable to distortion [as published]. If the Philippines conference did not refer to these cases one should state that the object of the convocation of such a conference was something other than to combat terrorism.

Iran: Kabul on Rabbani's Talks With Iran's Rafsanjani

LD0503200696 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1530 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The first round of talks between esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani, president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, and Iranian President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani was held yesterday [as heard]. BAKHTAR's special correspondent reports from Tehran:

During talks held at Sa'dabad Palace, the Afghan president discussed the peace-seeking efforts of the Islamic State of Afghanistan for the restoration of peace and security in Afghanistan, and said that the current fighting in the country is being caused by external factors.

Appreciating the continuing efforts of the leadership of the Islamic Republic of Iran for restoring peace and for seeking grounds for understanding between the parties involved, the Afghan president said: The people of Afghanistan will never forget the assistance of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Afghan nation rendered during the jihad and after the establishment of the Islamic state. [words indistinct] and the expansion of relations between the two countries.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani spoke of the need for brotherhood between the brotherly nations of Afghanistan and Iran and the necessity of restoring peace in the land of the Afghans. He added: The only way to resolve the Afghan problem is by talks and understanding among all parties and groups. It is only by this path that the Afghans can achieve a lasting peace in their country. Esteemed President Rafsanjani described the talks held with the Islamic State of Afghanistan in various fields as fruitful, and added: The people of the Islamic Republic consider it their duty not to spare any kind of assistance to the Afghan people at this critical juncture.

Iran: Daily Claims U.S. Becoming Isolated Over Cuba

LD0403132996 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 2 Mar P2

[Editorial article "The USA Is Alone Again"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Last week two US registered Cessna airplanes, piloted by members of Brothers to the Rescue, a Miami- based Cuban exile group aiding Cuban refugees, entered Cuba's airspace and were shot down after ignoring warnings from Cuban air control officers.

The incident is another example of Washington-sponsored activities aimed at destabilizing a sovereign independent state. Brothers to the Rescue is an organization financed and sponsored by the US to overthrow the legal government of Fidel Castro. It is also a clear example of an organization which promotes state- sponsored terrorism in flagrant violation of the UN Charter and international law which call for non-intervention in a sovereign state's-domestic affairs.

The incident has elicited a flurry of reactions from Washington and Cubans in exile.

Why has Washington reacted so strongly? Is it because it considers the act a blow to its arrogance as a world power with the freedom to disregard international laws and practices?

The US Congress has been swift to take up Clinton's proposal to tighten more the economic noose around Cuba already in force since 1962. Flights from Florida to Havana have already been suspended which is the lifeline of the US-Cuban trade.

The US recent decision to tighten economic sanctions is another instance of violation of international law and the by-laws of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Clinton's agreement to a compromise on the so-called Helm-Burton legislation will allow US nationals (Cubans who possess US citizenship) whose property was confiscated by Cuba, to seek compensation in US courts from any foreign national who has legally acquired property from Cuba's government.

In the face of its inability to impose its will on Third World countries, the US tries to rely on the threat of

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sanctions to make these countries kowtow. The US decision to apply sanctions to Third World countries, as in the case of Haiti, has already come under fire from US partners and allies.

Mexico's state oil company, PEMEX, has already announced its unwillingness to tow [as published] the line of any possible US legislation to tighten economic sanctions against Cuba by cutting more business deals. In the words of PEMEX President, Adrian Lajous, "US laws apply inside the United States."

Canadian Internal Trade Minister Art Eggleton has said that he would express Canada's displeasure at US efforts to tighten trade sanctions against Cuba when he meets members of the US administration next week. While taking cognizance of the reasons for any US action, he said, "I don't think they should be taking it out on Canada," again, the reason is obvious: Any US decision is purely an internal matter and one which cannot be forced on another sovereign state such as Canada which is a member of the WTO and the North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

Cuban exile groups — albeit supported, financed and sponsored by the US — have decided to take to the air and sea today to protest Cuba's downing of its two Cessna planes resulting in the loss of four American lives. Cuban exiles in Miami plan to sail today to the spot where the two Cessna airplanes disappeared after being shot down after ignoring warnings from Cuban air officials. They will again invade Cuban air space to drop wreaths into the water in memory of the pilots who violated Cuba's airspace.

Havana has justified its response ever since a similar incident took place in the Bay of Pigs, pointing to the continued threat of US violation of its sovereignty all these years. It has warned that it will not take these incidents lightly but will counter them with the strongest means. The lesson the US has learned comes too late. There are not tests to be tested in troubled waters without disastrous consequences.

Washington has announced another Clinton test: "To make sure they can be a safe, dignified, peaceful and lawful event on Saturday (today)."

This will be another instance of its defiance to international law and the internal affairs of Cuba. If the spot where the two aircraft were shot down is definitely within Cuban airspace, can the move be defended as "lawful"? If the move is not lawful, can Clinton count on it to be peaceful?

The US will do better to stop the Cuban exiles from again testing Cuba's patience. If it has not learned a lesson from the latest incident, when will it ever learn? The message Cuba sent was very clear: Clinton had better set his home in order instead of poking his nose into other countries' affairs. The humiliation of being rebuffed by Canada and Europe should, hopefully, make it abandon more future state-sponsored terrorism.

Iran: SALAM Views Esfahan Friday Prayers on Election Candidates

LD0403151596 Tehran SALAM in Persian 2 Mar 96 p 10

[Article by unidentified SALAM correspondent: "The substitute Friday imam of Esfahan criticizes the unjustified rejection of deputies"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Esfahan — Splendid enemy-crushing Friday prayer ceremonies were held in Esfahan yesterday, with Hojjat ol- Eslam val-Moslemin Sheykh 'Abbas-'Ali Rowhani, substitute Friday imam of Esfahan, delivering the sermons to a large crowd of worshippers in Imam Square.

In his first sermon, Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Rowhani continued his discussion from previous weeks about marriage in Islam. In his second sermon, the substitute Friday imam of Esfahan invited the worshippers to observe piety and, referring to the elections for the fifth term of the Majles, he said: The important issue of the day is the issue of the elections and our vigilant and revolutionary nation is preparing itself for sending pious, revolutionary, and brave deputies to the Majles on Friday 8 March.

He referred to the advice issued by the leader of the revolution in connection with electing deputies, and said: The first quality needed by a deputy is commitment to Islam and to the shining commands of religion. A representative of this Muslim nation must be religious and adhere to Islam so that they will be faithful to the revolution, the achievements won by the blood of our martyrs, and stand firm like mountains before the enemies of God and the enemies of the revolution.

He added: Sometimes, it is heard here or there that people are holding religious ceremonies and spending money under false pretexts to win a seat in the Majles. Such people are not worthy of being deputies.

The substitute Friday imam of Esfahan advised election candidates to avoid excesses and overspending in their campaigns, because, if they do not, it will have an effect on the people and it may be that, if a campaign becomes excessive, the people will feel that you are not suited for going to the Majles.

The substitute Friday imam of Esfahan then criticized unjustified rejections of qualifications [of aspiring candidates] and said: Despite the advice of the eminent

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leader, certain things have occurred in relation to the approval or rejection of candidates and, unfortunately, in many instances, people have acted unwisely and this is cause for regret and complaint. He asked the ever-present people not to allow these unjustified or justified approvals and rejections to affect their decision to go to polling stations; they should know that voting is a sacred duty and we all have to perform this sacred duty.

He added: There is room for complaint with regards to the approvals and rejections. The people who carried out this task are not perfect and they may have made mistakes, but this does not cancel our duty and my religious brothers and sisters must go to the polling stations and vote for the people who are the most capable.

Iran: Editorial—Majles Elections 'Decisive' for Future Direction

LD0403172896 Tehran HAMSHAHRI in Persian 2 Mar 96 p 1

[Unattributed editorial: "We Have No Time for More Hollow and Costly Slogans"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Very important and fundamental changes have occurred in recent years in the political geography of the world. This has been to such an extent that, on the eve of the 21st century on the Christian calendar, a formidable, although still unclear, image of the world in the next century has come into being that is completely different from its traditional image known during the almost-ended century.

In the course of these changes and as a result of the upheaval in international economic relations, the word "power" and the capacity to have an impact on the environment or even such concepts "national security" and "national interests" have undergone profound changes, and such weapons as "tanks" and "guns" have inevitably given way to economic strength and financial power as the sources of political strength. Thus, for example, the eastern European countries have suddenly, with the new concept of strength, found their entire gigantic and unified military machine ineffective, and they have hastily and, of course, at great expense, embarked on repairing the roots of their strength and credibility in international relations.

It is natural that the Islamic Republic of Iran, as a member of the world community, is not immune to these upheavals and their effects. The current international developments compel us, more than anything else, to come up with a new description of the world, its alliances and its new demands, and to upgrade and prepare our resources in line with its ever-increasing complexities. If this is the case, strengthening and repairing the pillars of our national economy have become one of the most important duties of legislative bodies, at least in the realm of material things.

Unfortunately, in recent years, the country's executive and legislative structure have not been upgraded in such a way as to be up to the required aims and processes. During these years, at a time when the executive organ has placed national economic reconstruction on its agenda, as the most important national mission in the current circumstances of the world, some forces in the country have, knowingly or unknowingly, thwarted the efforts of the executive organ with slogans that roll easily off the tongue but are, in practice, either impossible or only possible at the expense of destroying "tomorrow" in order to provide for "today." This phenomenon has had no outcome other than a steep increase in expenditure, a reduction in productivity, and growing confusion.

Sooner or later, at least for a four-year term, this situation must be halted. We do not have the time to continue this method of trial and error, and we cannot afford to see our valuable resources depleted, especially in circumstances in which the smallest amount of these resources can prove crucial and vital in determining the position of our country in the next century. The results of the elections for the fifth term of the Majles can, in view of this, be decisive in determining our direction during the next few decades.

Iran: Tehran Sees World Focusing Attention on Majles Elections

NC0603075396 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 6 Mar 96

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] Two days before the elections for the fifth term of the Majles reports indicate that correspondents from over 70 countries will be in Iran to report on them.

The interest shown by world news centers in the Majles elections and the arrival of numerous correspondents show that the fifth term Majles elections have turned Iran into the focus of the world's news agencies. Foreign correspondents have shown the same interest in past elections in Iran, disseminating the news worldwide.

This attention stems from the significant position of Islamic Iran in the region and our country's sensitive role in regional and global developments and speaks of the impact that political activities and participation have on other developments in Iran. By establishing new

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political institutions, coupled with the unprecedented participation of the people in political affairs, and by manifesting the political teachings of Islam the Islamic Revolution has offered a new experience to the world. The elections for the fifth Majles term, conducted in a favorable way and in conformity with every law and regulation, will reemphasize the significance of the elections in Iran and the people's effective and positive participation in determining society's political fate.

One of the things on which the news centers are focusing is the campaigning by the candidates and the people's turnout on Friday [8 March]. Tonight is the deadline for the campaigns and the correspondents' attention will now focus on the people's participation in the elections. The presence of society's various groups at the polling stations will again show to the world that political awareness in Islamic Iran is a special phenomenon that characterizes not just one group or one strata in society. It shows that all the people participate in the elections by correctly understanding society's priorities and vote to form a strong and favorable Majles entrusted with legislating all the affairs of the country.

These elections will show to the world and to people who are interested in Iranian affairs that the people's revolutionary and Islamic zeal continues and that these elections are an effort to implement the Islamic teachings that are supported by the people.

Iran: Editorial Questions Funding for Party's Election Campaign

LD0103153096 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 27 Feb 96 p 2

[Unattributed editorial: "Who Must Provide the Answer"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The whole of Tehran is these days covered with huge and expensive advertisement bills of the Servants [of Construction] faction [supporters of President Rafsanjani's reforms]. Clearly, a lot of money has been spent on commissioning these bills and posters, and if we also consider the high costs involved in their installation, then we are basically facing astronomical sums.

On the other hand, the Ruhaniyyat-e Mobarez [Militant Clergy Association] has also put up its posters in some of Tehran's squares. Although these are also an expensive wastage, but they are much fewer than the posters put up by the Servants faction. The move by Ruhaniyyat-e Mobarez and also the installation of expensive posters by the Servants faction are both worthy of criticism, but, the Servants' move, in addition, also raises a number of questions.

The question on everyone's lips is: Where does the money for the expensive election posters of the Servants faction come from? So far, unfortunately, there have been no logical and convincing answers to this question.

The question is: What is the source of funding for the production and installation of these expensive campaign bills and posters?

If these expenses are paid out of government and public funds, then this is clearly a case of misuse of funds and should be dealt with by law. If the expenses are paid by the members of the faction personally, then the question is: "How did they earn it?" This is particularly salient given the astronomical sums involved that certainly cannot be met by the government employees' salaries — even ministers and deputy ministers.

On the other hand, if there are other sources involved, then what is abundantly clear is that these unknown sources must enjoy huge capital and wealth. Moreover, people have the right to know that on the basis of what motive and in pursuit of what aim these sources have chosen to spend such huge sums of money. Can one say that they are motivated by their love of the Islamic revolution and their interest in the country's construction and development?

Some may ask why we show so much curiosity and sensitivity toward such issues. We must tell them that one cannot overlook the subject matter of the question, especially since it does not merely concern specific persons and individuals. What is at stake is the Islamic revolution and its values. Not only people have the right to receive a clear answer to this question, but various legal and supervisory organs, such as the State General Inspectorate, etc., are also obliged to provide the necessary answer.

It is regrettable that some political factions and movements, faced with some possible questions, may decide to give priority to their own factional interests and opt for silence, instead of consideration for the interests of the people who have given their blood for this revolution and have suffered long enough. In other words, they may prefer a trouble-free silence to actually expressing words that might prove troublesome.

As our great Imam [Khomeyni] — may he be admitted to God's paradise — stressed, writers and authors have a responsibility not only toward their own writings, but also toward what is written by others.

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Iran: Editorial Urges People To Reject Wealthy Candidates

NC0103180196 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 26 Feb 96 pp 1, 16

[Editorial: "Money and the Majles"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful.

Premature campaigning by candidates before the formal announced date is a violation that is liable to prosecution. Whether violators have been dealt with so far is a subject for the proper authorities to discuss and not one for this article.

In recent weeks, a large number of those volunteering for the Majles from various constituencies have begun extensive campaigns to introduce themselves. It is for the officials to decide whether their activities are legal or not. However, a point worth considering, which has a direct impact on the outcome of the elections and the Majles, is that these canvassing activities are in most cases based on the resources and wealth of individuals and trends that clearly represent heartless, affluent, and parasitical groups. There is no doubt that if they join the Majles, they will only be concerned with safeguarding personal interests.

The time for the legal authorities to remove such individuals has passed and so the people should clarify their obligations regarding them. The fact is that the nation is the final arbiter. The people are the ones who will determine the Majles' composition by casting their votes and the course of action to be followed by this important decisionmaking center.

The role of the executive and supervisory committees and the Guardians' Council in preventing corrupt individuals from joining the Majles cannot be ignored. However, one cannot deny the fact that due to the lack of a definite reason or documentary evidence, in most cases it is not possible to remove individuals. In such cases, the only solution is for the people to play their roles and carefully cast their votes to prevent corrupt individuals from entering the Majles.

Disturbing reports indicating the miraculous role of money in the campaign of some candidates have been received from certain constituencies. Some candidates are deceiving the people using the support of factory owners, tribal chiefs, and economic terrorists, while others are abusing their office resources in order to spread an intense publicity campaign.

Nowadays, the campaign activities are using promises, cash gifts, and the distribution of essential goods, which strongly negate the mission of the Majles deputies in an Islamic system. This also undermines all possibilities for an honest and wholesome election campaign between competent individuals who do not have such financial backing and resources and those who are incompetent but endowed with financial support. This is a problem that the Islamic Republic of Iran should resolve and it should prevent such conditions from arising by devising clearcut regulations.

The people should be vigilant in identifying the election nominees and should categorically reject anyone who has the slightest connection with the wealthy, the money-worshipers, and the cliques of power and opulence. They should not permit the Islamic Majles, which is the product of the martyrs' blood, to be dominated by money.

Iran: Guardian Council Member on Rejection of Majles Candidates

LD0203140196 Tehran IRNA in English 1328 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Mar. 2, IRNA — A member of the Council of Guardians said on Saturday [2 Mar] that some 80 percent of nominees for Majles elections whose candidacy have been rejected enjoy sound and clear political and moral backgrounds.

The council member Mohammad Reza 'Abbasi-Fard explained that many of the candidates have been rejected because of age problems, being illiterate, or failure to register on time.

He added that contrary to what some people may suggest in this regard, many of the rejected candidates occupy important posts at present or are expected to be chosen for similar vacancies in future.

He also warned that any violation of election regulations would be duly punished.

Iran: Freedom Movement Not To Take Part in Majles Elections

LD0303122796 Tehran IRNA in English 0832 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 3, IRNA — The Freedom Movement of Iran (FMI) will not take part in the March 8 Majles elections, reported the English daily 'IRAN NEWS' Sunday [3 March] quoting FMI Secretary General Ebrahim Yazdi.

According to the paper Yazdi attributed the decision to lack of facility to publicize the stand of his political group and its four candidates.

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Iran: Use of Banners in Election Campaign Prohibited

LD0303123496 Tehran IRNA in English 0918 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 3, IRNA — Head of the supervisory board of the Guardians Council in Tehran Hojjat ol-Eslam Kazem Seddiqi said that displaying the typical metal or cloth banners in the current election campaign by some individual candidates or groups is against the law.

In an interview printed in the english-language daily 'KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL' on Sunday [3 March], he noted that the council held an emergency session of the members, also attended by Vice-President Hasan Habibi, and unanimously reached an agreement to collect such items of propaganda.

"The judicial officials had ordered candidates to dismantle the banners by 9 a.m. Friday," otherwise the law enforcement forces will take direct measures, he said.

Seddiqi urged the people for massive turn-out in the elections and asked candidates to observe election ethics.

Iran: Radio, Television Conducting Election Opinion Poll

LD0303171796 Tehran BAHMAN in Persian 24 Feb 96 p 3

[FBIS Translated Text] An official institution is conducting an opinion poll on the elections for the first time in Iran. As the election approaches, the research center of the Voice and Vision is conducting opinion polls on election related issues. In these opinion polls, issues such as people's viewpoints about political factions, political tendencies, and their level of knowledge about political factions will be studied. It is planned to conduct this opinion poll on a regular basis until the end of the elections. This is the first time that opinion polls are being conducted in a scientific way in connection with an election in Iran. In this opinion poll, which will take place in Tehran, a number of people will be selected on a random basis and a questionnaire will be filled reflecting their views.

Iran: Timing for Election Polling Announced

LD0303185696 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The state elections headquarters today announced the exact time when polling will begin for the Fifth Majles elections. We have established direct links with the election headquarters so that our colleagues may provide you with more detail.

[Correspondent] [passage omitted] Here is Mr. Alireza Tabesh, head of the State Elections headquarters.

[Tabesh] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Just as our esteemed compatriots know, polling will take place next Friday, 8 March, throughout the country, in about 30,000 polling stations. The polls will remain open — in accordance with Article 11 of the Election Laws — for at least ten hours, starting at 0800 [0430 GMT] and ending at 1800 [1430 GMT]. If there is a need for extending these hours in some stations, or even in the whole country, this will be announced on the same day by the Interior Minister from the state elections headquarters. But the polls have to remain open for at least ten hours.

[Correspondent] What about religious minorities?

[Tabesh] Religious minorities will also be casting their votes during the same period of time in polling stations set up especially for them. [passage omitted]

Iran: Need for Reevaluation of Candidates' Credentials Viewed

NC0403071596 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 25 Feb 96 pp 1, 16

[Editorial: "Conflicting Motives"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A variety of reports on how the election supervisory committees are approaching the qualifications of those volunteering for candidacy for the fifth Majles are being received. A number of reports indicate the ineligibility of candidates, according to a review by some executive teams in the provinces and in Tehran. Other reports say that the qualifications of a number of the nominees approved as eligible by the executive committees have been rejected by the supervisory committees.

Meanwhile, some of the officials who are involved in the screening of credentials complain of the difficult and time- consuming nature of the task on one hand, and on the other hand, they say the process is based on the premise that those individuals whose qualifications have been confirmed are considered eligible, and those candidates on whose qualifications there is no information available are rejected.

The result of adopting such a modus operandi has been that a number of those who are really qualified but, are not well known, are left in limbo or are put in the category of those whose qualifications have not been confirmed and do not have the right to enter the elections. It is obvious that such a policy will jeopardize the rights of some nominees and tarnish their reputation. In addition, it will also undermine the enthusiasm of the elections, which would be an overt conflict of motives.

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In order to prevent harmful repercussions, and ensure the overall wholesomeness of the elections, it is important that the esteemed Guardians' Council keep some points in mind. Because the esteemed Guardians' Council is inclined to act in line within the norms of the law and shari'ah, it will keep these points in mind, and it will prevent all kinds of pretexts from being used by those who attack this important legal institution. The points are as follows:

1. If the time for appraising individual files is inadequate, the time for canvassing should be reduced and the time for evaluation should be increased. It is natural and preferable if the length of a publicity campaign is sacrificed for a more thorough evaluation of credentials and the vindication of the people's rights.

2. Increasing the numbers involved in screening is another way of solving the problem of many files and a time shortage.

3. A review of the evaluation of criteria for credentials and the timing of the qualifications endorsement announcement would solve the evaluation of eligibility problem to a great extent. The fact is that the current guidelines against the principle of acquittal would broaden the scope for the introduction of personal and factional preferences, which, in turn, jeopardize the rights of some of the candidates.

A reappraisal of this procedure could prevent the imposing of particular preferences and would limit the voicing of all opinions within a legal framework. It is obvious that these points do not apply to those individuals whose affiliation to the deviant groups is known or to cases where there is clear evidence of immoral character or opposition to the system. The esteemed Council of Guardians should perform its legal obligation regarding these individuals without any leniency whatsoever.

Iran: Majles Elections Viewed Within Domestic, Foreign Contexts

NC0403080396 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] Islamic Iran will witness one of its most sensitive and fateful parliamentary elections in the next few days. These elections are being held amid intensifying international political and economic developments, the impact of which is perceptible in the sensitivities, approaches, and behavior of Iranian society.

Within the context of foreign affairs, the fifth Majles elections are being held amid economic sanctions and America's allocation of a special budget to inflict blows on the system of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Naturally, this wretched attempt targets the Iranian people and government. Although the American officials know such plots are ineffective and the Iranian people have shown—with their constant presence on the scene—that they are ready to confront such machinations, the firm presence of the people in the elections for the fifth Majles will have greater and more effective repercussions than at any other time. In this way the engineers and policymakers in the White House will receive clearer answers and messages from the Iranian nation.

Regionally, the American forces, which have intensified their presence in the Persian Gulf since the oil war, have always had an instigatory and satanic presence. To the north of Iran, the Zionist regime and Washington are thinking about infiltrating the Central Asian countries and are striving to destroy Iran's relations with its neighbors. To the east, Afghanistan is involved in a war among rebel groups and developments are unpredictable. To the west, Iraq is entangled in separatism in the north and domestic unrest in the south and in the center. On the other side of the border, the tragic situation of Palestine and the subservient compromise process are becoming more complicated each day and, at the same time, the flame of the intifadah is burning brighter.

The fifth Majles is being formed as the 20th century nears its close. This term will lay the foundation stone for the political, economic, and cultural structures for the 21st century. The fifth Majles will be formed as the process of the clash of cultures, the confrontation between Islamic and Western civilizations, becomes more obvious and the confrontation of forces, between materialistic culture and divine culture, becomes clearer.

With the disintegration of the atheist system of the East and Western culture's belief that it was entering an arena without rivals, the response by the oppressed people worldwide to Islam and the wave of Islamism in various countries places the West, especially America, in front of a new phenomenon.

Under such conditions on the eve of the 21st century and with the people's inclination toward religion and spirituality growing daily, the engineers of the new international order and those who want to disseminate Western culture as the dominating culture worldwide are facing a new phenomenon—the growth of Islam.

The sensitivities of the elections at home are no less than on the international level. Within the domestic context,

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the Majles elections are being held 17 years after the birth of the Islamic Revolution. The presidential elections will also be held during this term and the link between these elections and the Majles is determining. The fifth Majles term will coincide with the implementation of the economic and social development program. Naturally the country needs stability in decisionmaking, more than ever, to fulfill the objectives of the Second [Development] Plan.

All these conditions and sensitivities and the successful confrontation of them dictate that the people participate in the elections and correctly identify who they are voting for and what these people's outlook and potential is. Those who undertake the heavy responsibility of representing the people should—in addition to having valuable and principled views that conform with the Iranian Constitution—also have the necessary experience and capability to analyze issues and to choose the best solution from those available.

Iran: Clandestine Calls On People To Boycott Elections

NC0403081696 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Persian 1500 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Dear compatriots, respectable people of Kordestan: The Iranian regime is an antipopular regime that is the enemy of all the people's freedoms. The Majles should be the symbol of these freedoms. Freedom of elections means overthrowing the regime. In Iran there is no freedom for the people and no freedom of elections; the regime's hue and cry in relation with this will not fool the alert people of Iran. It is every patriot's duty not to participate in the elections, but to isolate the regime as much as possible.

O respectable and oppressed people of Kordestan: You, who are [words indistinct] of the oppression against you and know how your national demands are being answered with bullets, torture, and executions, should know that the so-called candidates [words indistinct] are not your representatives [words indistinct].

[Words indistinct] by not participating in the elections. If you have no alternative, but to participate, you can write the word democracy [passage indistinct].

Iran: Over 31,000 Inspectors To Supervise Majles Elections

LD0403100096 Tehran IRNA in English 0916 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 4, IRNA — More than 31,000 persons will supervise and monitor the next Friday Majles elections, said Deputy Minister of Interior for Legal and Majles Affairs, Hojatoleslam Sadreddin Shari'ati.

In an interview with the persian daily 'ABRAR' on Monday, he said that special inspection teams will also be formed at the ministry to carefully oversee the elections.

This group will comprise neutral persons selected by offices of the governors general.

In the capital, he said, 1,000 persons from among neutral academics, instructors and managers have been selected to be stationed at the four governorates of the greater Tehran: Shahr-e Rey, Islam Shahr and Shemiranat on the election day.

The ministry intends to assign one inspector for each booth but it is more likely that every three booths will have one inspector.

He said 410 complains have been lodged with the ministry so far, most of which deal with the approval or rejection of the qualification of candidates.

Iran: IRGC's Reza'i Urges High Turnout in Majles Election

LD0403100996 Tehran IRNA in English 0814 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Shiraz, Fars Prov., March 4, IRNA — Commander-in-chief of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC), Major General Mohsen Reza'i, here Sunday said that the next Friday Majles elections are being closely watched by the world and political analysts are waiting for the election results. Addressing a gathering of Basij forces (volunteer forces) in this southern province, he added that the national and Islamic will is the main source empowering the Iranian nation to defeat the U.S. "Voting in the elections is another defeat for the world oppressors," said the IRGC commander. "The greater the number of the votes, the smaller the arena of activity of global arrogance against the Islamic system," said Reza'i.

He further emphasized that the electorates by casting ballots will take another step towards further consolidation of the pillars of the Islamic republic. He added that the elections provide another opportunity for the Iranian nation to demonstrate its power to the world arrogance.

Iran: Leader's Denial Follows 'Rumors' by Rejected Candidates

LD0403112796 Tehran IRNA in English 1029 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 4, IRNA — Office of the supreme leader of the Islamic revolution,

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Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i, in a statement here on Monday said that the leader has issued no order on approval or refusal of the eligibility of candidates running for the fifth Majles. A statement issued by the leader's office added that following finalization and release of the list of the candidates eligible to run in the next Friday Majles elections, rivals or opponents of certain candidates whose credentials have been rejected, have spread rumors that their candidacy had been turned down on the orders of the leader.

The statement in conclusion reiterated that no order or statement have been issued by the supreme leader in this connection. Legal action will be taken against those who make such claims, it added.

Iran: Former Budget Chief Sahabi Withdraws From Election Campaign

LD0403120496 Tehran IRNA in English 0901 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 4, IRNA — Ezzatollah Sahabi, former head of Plan and Budget Organization and a candidate close to the Freedom Movement of Iran (FMI) will not take part in the next Friday Majles elections, reported the English daily 'IRAN NEWS' Monday. In an interview with the paper, he attributed the decision to lack of a chance to communicate with the people and to inform them of his plans in the Majles.

He also claimed that "unsatisfactory atmosphere" of the election campaign was another reason for him to pull out.

Iran: Objections to Elections Must Be Filed 'Within a Week'

LD0403130696 Tehran IRNA in English 0807 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 4, IRNA — Those objecting to the upcoming Majles elections can file their complaints with the secretariat of the Guardians Council within a week after the polls, reported English-languge daily 'TEHRAN TIMES' on Monday.

The Artical 67 of the Elections Law reads that the executive bodies of the constituencies are required to submit the complaints to a joint session of the screening and supervisory bodies of the Guardians Council within a week after announcement of the final results of the polls.

If, according to a complaint, the authorities find abuses in a constituency, the result of that constituency will be declared null and void.

The Interior Ministry will send the complaints to the Central Supervisory Body and then to the Majles for final consideration. All the complaints should be handed over to the Majles before it approves the representatives' credentials, added the paper.

Elections for the fifth Majles will be held in 196 constituencies across the country next Friday [8 March] to elect 270 deputies.

Iran: Daily Calls For Observance of Ethics in Elections

LD0403144996 Tehran IRNA in English 1053 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 4, IRNA — A morning daily Monday editorialized on election ethics in the Islamic Republic of Iran saying that all candidates are provided with equal opportunity to introduce themselves to the electorate within one week.

The primary purpose for limiting the campaigning both monetarily and in time is that candidates lacking material wealth but rich in morality, virtue and human values, should not be handicapped due to lack of funds to help project a positive image of themselves via major publicity campaigns, 'KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL' wrote.

As to the violation of election ethics by some candidates, it wrote, "the election process should be strictly in accordance with constitutional law."

Only then will the nation, which has paid a high price to create an Islamic constitution and establish an Islamic republic, is able to send the most virtuous, god-fearing and qualified people to the lawmaking institution.

Iran: Deadline for Election Campaigns Set for 6 Mar

LD0403164296 Tehran IRNA in English 1529 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 4, IRNA — The elections headquarters announced here Monday that the deadline for the election campaigns would be 24:00 hours local time (20:30 hours GMT) on March 6.

According to the 56th Article of the Elections Law, nominees running for parliamentary polls are allowed to continue election campaigns 24 hours before the start of voting and forbids any activities by the nominees or their supporters after the deadline is over.

Moreover, based on the Article 62nd of the Elections Law, the press and periodicals would have no right to publish any materials in favor or against nominees three days before polling.

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Iran: Power, Money Said To Determine Outcome of Elections

NC0603054696 Tehran SALAM in Persian 22 Feb 96 p 2

["Special Answer to a Telephone Call" column]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Unidentified caller] If we accept that the criterion for election is the people's vote then, since your faction did not win in the previous elections, it means that the people did not vote for you. And if we accept that you campaigned but the people still did not vote, then we should also accept that the people believe what they see. Anyone who campaigns more wins more votes and the people do not choose correctly. Therefore, the conclusion that is drawn is that whoever has more money and power will win in the elections.

[SALAM] During the fourth term, the outcome of the elections was what was announced. On the very same day that the final results of the elections were announced, we published a commentary entitled "The Nation Determines the Votes" and we recognized the outcome.

As this dear reader has said, the majority of the people did not vote for the Militant Clerics Association and or the groups affiliated with it. Of course, this did not mean that we ruled out the existence of any type of fraud and dishonesty in the elections. But this was not to the extent that could affect the votes.

However, the main issue was the approach toward the rival groups and the elections and the fact that society was inculcated that the majority wanted one of the two rival groups to be in power and the other to be thrown out of the scene. The Voice and Vision [of the Islamic Republic of Iran] did its best to inculcate this idea. And in the midst of the group rivalries, suddenly the mosques were placed in the hands of one of the two rival groups, and through incidents and stands which we do not want to list here, they granted absolute freedom to one of the two rivals and tied the hands and feet of the other. In order to complement this atmosphere, suddenly—through a calculated decision—the credentials of 40 candidates affiliated with the side whose hands and feet had been tied were rejected, and some people outside the Majles who did not number more than the rejected candidates practically implied to all the election officials that this faction and process should leave the country's political scene.

Thus, the elections were characterized by an unequal rivalry and an unhealthy atmosphere, and the outcome was obvious from the very start. Now too, as stated by one of the members of the executive committee in Mashhad to one of the candidates whose credentials were rejected: The situation is the same as it was during the fourth term and the policies are what they were during the fourth term. Neither we nor you have changed, and until we are in power, this will be the situation.

However, we disagree with the conclusion drawn by our dear reader—that is, surrendering to the bitter reality that anyone who has more power and money will be able to succeed more. This reality is one of the problems that electorate systems face and something about which the high-ranking officials have warned. A solution should be sought for this problem. We should not give in to it.

Iran: Events on Election Sidelines Viewed

NC0603104796 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 25 Feb 96 p 2

[From the "Election Briefs" Column]

[FBIS Translated Text] In one of the cities of Mazandaran province, a prisoner took advantage of a few days of leave and registered as a candidate to contest the elections and returned to prison after doing so. It is worth mentioning that his credentials have not been endorsed.

—With the entry of the three candidates of the Workers' House, the joint list of the Functionaries of Reconstruction of Iran has been finalized.

—One of the election nominees in Mashhad promised that in the event of being elected, he would visit Mashhad once every three months to resolve the people's problems!

—The secretary of the Feda'iyan-e Eslam Association announced that the Association will support the list of the Islamic Researchers' Association in the upcoming elections.

—The Islamic Students' Association at the College of Legal Sciences disseminated its second election statement expressing opposition to the presence of liberals [preceding word in English] and unorthodox elements in the Majles, and its favoring of the supporters and defenders of the Hezbollahs and the basijis [popular mobilization force] in the lawmaking center of the country.

—The center of the Union of Islamic Students' Association and the university alumni rejected the nomination of Heshmatollah Tabarzadi, the editor in chief of the PAYAM-E DANESHJU weekly.

—It is being reported that one of the well-known feudals and magnates of Sanandaj, who is currently residing in Tehran, has allocated 100 million tumans for the

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election propaganda campaign he just initiated for his entry into the Majles.

—A German news agency reported the eligibility of 11 of the 15 candidates from the liberal [preceding word in English] group in Iran (the illegal Freedom Movement Organization), which had registered for the fifth Majles elections, was once again rejected by the supervisory committee.

—One of the members of the cabinet asked the people that after the names of the nominees are announced, they not heed any rumors and choose the best and most competent of the nominated candidates.

—The people of Orumiyeh are preparing to participate in the elections with immense zeal and fervor. Speaking to correspondents, they described it as the most important way of safeguarding and perpetuating the revolution and defeating the venomous plots of the enemies of their Islamic homeland.

—The Friday imam of Kermanshah asked volunteers who do not have enough aptitude to become Majles deputies to step aside for the benefit of the more competent ones and thus to make it easier for the people and to prevent wastage of funds. He stressed that the unsuitable individuals have made it their objective to gain influence in the Majles.

—The Friday imam of Sari said that weak-willed persons should not enter the Majles. He asserted that the deputies should not only be committed specialists, they should also have complete allegiance to the Velayat-e Faqih [rule by the supreme jurisconsult].

—The officials at the elections headquarters in the Zanjan, Babolsar, and (Band-e Pey) constituencies, in view of the extraordinary welcome, anticipated high participation in the elections in these areas and a need for increasing the number of ballot boxes in the region.

—The Genaveh Friday imam said: Majles deputy should have the mentality of a basiji and should be compassionate and kind to the impoverished and the deprived, but ruthless as a sharp-edged sword toward the enemies of the revolution. He should keep the interests of the people in mind rather than the interests of any particular group.

—The Dorud Friday imam stated: Some of the candidates nominated from this region were busy enjoying themselves outside the country during the Holy Defense [Iran-Iraq war] period, instead of being present at the fronts.

—The head of the election headquarters of Hamadan province warned that any premature canvassing such as graffiti on the walls, publicity caravans, or use of loudspeakers to disseminate the speeches of candidates outside the designated venues will be considered an election crime punishable by two to three days imprisonment.

—In view of the political atmosphere in West Azerbaijan province, nowadays it is being predicted that the vigilant Sunni and Shiite Muslims of this province will have a dazzlingly extraordinary presence on the scene of the fifth Majles elections.

—One of the candidates of the Sanandaj constituency, who is being supported by the country's Contractors' Syndicate, has promised the local contractors international tenders, even though the Sanandaj contractors do not have the capability to implement the smallest local projects.

Iran: Paper on 'Necessities' of Islamic Republic

LD0403154396 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 28 Feb 96 p 1

[Article by Mahmud Farshidi: "The Undisputed Necessity"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The interests of world arrogance demand that if it is unable to overthrow the Islamic Republic of Iran through force, plots, destruction or coup d'etat, it should think of another deception so that it may cast off troublesome Islam and create an Islam desired by America. In a meeting yesterday with the members of the Assembly of Experts, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i referred to "questioning and damaging the necessities of the Islamic Republic of Iran." Let us look at several of these "necessities" and the damage done:

1) The formation of Islamic government based on the Guardianship of the Jurisconsult:

The art of Imam Khomeyni, sanctified be his soul, was to wash off the dust of lowliness from the face of Muslims and to prove to them that they could not implement Islamic laws except through taking power and forming an Islamic government. But the BBC says: "The question is not whether we have an Islamic government or not — because the answer is not a yes or a no — the question is what kind of society we could create to be 'progressive' that could be in accordance with the modern age — that could advance without sacrificing Islamic principles?" And the BBC continues its guidance: "The question is not simply to have or not no have an Islamic government or country, but also if it is 'democratic' or not".

The BBC thus tells its own elements that they should portray popular vote standing in contradiction to the

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Guardianship of the Jurisconsult and that they should promote the discourse on the Representativeness of the Jurisconsult as well as doubts about legitimacy [of the government]. If some people were under the impression that doubts and questions of such nature — which have been appearing in many publications and many intellectual milieu and in great numbers recently — were the mental leakage that the gentlemen had achieved themselves, now here is the evidence to the contrary. One can rest assured that the gentlemen are repeating in parrot fashion the statements of the Eternal Master [BBC].

2) The negation of the order of domination and battle against world arrogance:

The foremost important factor that attracted the attention of nations, in particular the Muslim nations, to the Islamic revolution was the revolution's call for independence which blended with the slogan of Death to America and which destroyed the monopoly of the world gendarme. Here world arrogance has again resorted to deceit in expressing concern for Islam in order to rob us of the Islamic flag. Recently Mr. Clinton told the Jordanian parliament: "There are people who insist that there is an unpassable gulf between our culture and that of the Middle East and therefore there is going to be an inevitable clash between the American and the Islamic cultures. But I oppose this view and I respect Islam."

There is no need to say that here it will be the United States which will determine the principles determining the compromise talks between the American culture and the Islamic world. The intellectual and non-intellectual mercenaries of the world arrogance have orders to call on our revolutionary people for conciliation and reconciliation with world arrogance.

3) Social justice:

It is now 17 years since our revolution created a tremendous wave across the world and called for the negation of domination of the world arrogance. One of the main factors that can support the progress of this wave is the support for social justice. In fact social justice is the theater where the practical confrontation will take place between all the values of Islamic revolution and the material values dominating the world. Since the outcome of this confrontation is clearly predictable, it could be the best messenger and trumpet for the Islamic revolution. It is on this basis that there has been a need for making and marketing an alternative for this slogan. And what slogan could be more charming than that of development to carry out this duty against the slogan of justice.

Yesterday, the HAMSHAHRI newspaper complained about a group who are trying in an offensive way and through false reasoning to place the [slogans of] development and social justice face to face. Of course we too believe that development need not stand in contradiction to social justice but be a prelude to it. But we ask the HAMSHAHRI newspaper how could an idea find popular depth if it had not been socially prepared. It is why that if we see some people expressing concern about development being sacrificed for social justice, we ask has there not been a poor defense of development leading to such reactions of opinion?

Fortunately, we are hearing that there is action to fight poverty. Here one course of action must be fighting the roots of poverty and the undeniable impact of inflation on the spread of poverty. In other words, one of the important steps that must be taken to uproot poverty is to control inflation and achieve a development that could serve social justice and to bring prosperity to all towns and people alike.

What has kept the issue of social justice in the forefront of ideas and planning are [1] the guidance of his eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i to the cabinet regarding the fact that social justice is a priority and that development is a means and [2] his eminence's advice to the fourth Majles followed by changes to the Second Development Plan by the Majles. God willing, the fifth Majles will be more able than the fourth Majles to deal with the issue and will be able to prepare the grounds for the practical implementation of social justice through its guidance and supervision.

Iran: Paper Reports Death of Shah's Sister

LD0403113796 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 2 Mar 96 p 2

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Shams Pahlavi, the elder sister of the former Shah of Iran, died at the age of 78 in California Thursday night [29 February], according to the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) yesterday.

Iran: Commentary Says Scott Report Undermines Conservative Government

LD0503114996 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 29 Feb 96 p12

[Political commentary: "The Impact of 'Iraq-gate' on the Conservatives' Record" by A. A. Niyamanesh]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The British parliament finally voted on the Scott Report last Monday after a three-and-a-half year investigation, and just one vote enabled

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John Major's government to prolong its political life. [passage omitted]

The Major government conducted a great many negotiations in order to win the vote in parliament and it went so far as to admit that it made mistakes. However, Monday's vote showed that the pillars of the Major government have been badly shaken. It is conceivable, therefore, that the Major government be unable to act from a position of strength on two major issues it faces — Ireland and the European Union. This is at a time when the Major government is taking up inflexible positions on these two sensitive issues.

It should be said that after 17 years of Conservative rule in London, alarm bells have been ringing for this party since Major came to power; this has led to acute differences within the party, a cabinet reshuffle, and the departure of members of parliament from the Conservative Party in parliament.

Thus, as the date of the British general elections in mid-May 1996 [as published] approaches, doubts about whether the Conservatives can win another victory have intensified. In the meantime, according to opinion polls just before the vote on the Scott Report, the opposition Labor Party led by Tony Blair enjoys the support of 60 percent of the population. It seems, therefore, that it is the Conservative Party [as published] which stands a better chance of victory in current circumstances; especially because Major's performance on the issue of Northern Ireland and toward the Ulster Unionist Party has cast a shadow over this party's support for the Conservative Party. On the other hand, there is no possibility of an election within the party in order to endorse Major's leadership or to elect a new strong leader for the party.

Iran: Article Criticizes Oil Subsidies as 'Injustice'

LD0403220296 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 29 Feb 96 p 4

[Article by Mohammad Hasan Qadiri-Abyaneh: "Eradication of Poverty — Subsidies and Independence"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The annual worth value of Iran's oil is over $25 billion, of which we export only $14 billion, while extraction costs amount to $2 billion.

In other words, Iran's real income from oil exports after deducting extraction costs is $12 billion, and $11 billion have been allocated to fuel and energy materials subsidies.

Is everybody able to understand the enormity of that figure?

If that huge sum were spent on construction and production, would inflation not be harnessed? If that huge sum were spent on the development of Islamic Iran, would the country's currency not be strengthened and the people's purchasing power not be increased?

If that huge sum were not turned into pollutants and spent on construction, would the economic might of the Islamic system of our country not increase manifold and not render Iran more and more independent of foreign countries? Would that not result in ever- increasing prestige for Islam and our Islamic country?

If that huge sum were spent on eradicating deprivation and poverty, would social justice, which is an important aim of our revolutionary system, not be attained?

Is it right to waste $11 billion in the form of profligate use of oil by-products stemming from the subsidies, and then for the government to be forced to borrow from non-Islamic countries for certain development and construction expenditure?

Do our people realize what an injustice subsidies on oil by- products are?

Do those who oppose the reduction or elimination of subsidies on fuel know that fuel subsidies are 1.5 times the development budget allocation for 1375 [1996-7]. And that is while the 1375 development budget allocation, which is 42 percent of the government's total budget, is unprecedented in Iranian history.

The development budget allocation for 1375 is over 22 trillion rials. Calculated at 3,000 rials per dollar, the subsidy for fuel in 1374 was 33 trillion rials, which is 1.5 times 1375's development budget allocation.

Subsidizing paraffin and diesel oil at 60 tumans per liter and petrol at 50 tumans per liter has resulted in great waste in the consumption of those vital and diminishing materials. Iran's consumption of fossil fuels equals that of Indo-China with a population of one billion. [passage omitted]

Is it right for us to destroy unfairly this diminishing asset and sacrifice the future of the country for the comfort and profligacy of the carefree rich? The Majles should take steps decisively and quickly to stop this great injustice, and the government should be assisted in improving the situation. [passage omitted]

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Pakistan

Pakistan: Iranian Minister Meets Ali, Comments on Regional Issues

BK0403152296 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1400 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Iranian deputy foreign minister, Mr. (Morteza Sarmadi), called on the foreign minister, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, in Islamabad today and discussed bilateral issues, including situation in Afghanistan. Pakistan and Iran believe that a solution of the Afghan problem has to emerge from Afghans themselves. The two countries, however, also support the efforts of the UN and OIC [Organization of the Islamic Conference] for restoration of peace and stability in Afghanistan.

The Iranian deputy foreign minister, Mr. (Morteza Sarmadi), has reiterated Iran's stand on Kashmir dispute and said it should be solved in accordance with the wishes of the Kashmiri people and through UN initiatives. Addressing a news conference in Islamabad this afternoon, he said Iran has always supported the Kashmiri people and its stand on Kashmir has not been changed.

On the Afghanistan problem, he said Iran and Pakistan's stand on this issue is that the warring groups in Afghanistan should sit together in order to bring peace and stability in their country. He said Afghan people should themselves solve their problems for which Pakistan and Iran could help them in this regard. Mr. (Sarmadi) described his talks with the Pakistani foreign minister and senior officials as fruitful and result-oriented. In reply to a question, he said that construction of Pakistan-Iran oil refinery near Karachi and the matter of laying gas pipeline from Iran to Pakistan has also progressed. [sentence as heard].

Earlier, speaking at the Institute of Strategic Studies in Islamabad, the Iranian deputy foreign minister highlighted various aspects of Iran's foreign policy, with particular reference to Asia. He dispelled the impression that Iran's invitation to Mr. Borhanoddin Rabbani was some sort of a signal reflecting Iran's support to him and said both the countries want to solve the crisis through cooperation.

To a question about India's massive military spending and its hegemonistic designs, he said in the presence of such a policy, cooperation cannot materialize among countries in the region.

Pakistan: Iranian Envoy Notes 'Credible Progress' in Relations

BK0503102596 Islamabad THE NATION in English 5 Mar 96 p 1,11

[Report by THE NATION reporter]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] There has been a credible progress in Pak-Iran ties since Premier Bhutto's last November visit to Tehran, claims Mehdi Mohammad Akhondzadeh, the Iranian Ambassador.

Politically, he said, officials of the two sides have continued "shuttling" to identify "issues" and make "progress" on them. Mr. Borojerdi visited Islamabad twice. Then, Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati paid a visit to Pakistan. Foreign Secretary Najmuddin Sheikh also visited Tehran last month.

It is in the non-political sphere that the real progress has been achieved, even if it is still a "slow progress," said Mr. Akhondzadeh at a lunch reception he gave to the visiting Deputy Foreign Minister Mr. Sarmadi.

According to him, the Pak-Iran textile mill project that had been in limbo for the last 15 years might materialise in near future. It would apply some 6,000 people in the Balochistan province. In addition, recently, a meeting of officials of the two countries took place recently to give a practical shape to the first refinery project in Pakistan. Although, while answering to a Press question, he said the two countries had not signed any agreement whereby Iran would barter Pakistan export goods in exchange of its oil. "We do so only with countries that have oil refinery facilities."

The Iranian Ambassador said that Iran was also interested in the two countries had also made some head-way in the project in setting up in Iran, sugar and cement factories with the help of Pakistan.

According to Mr. Akhondzadeh, there has also been progress in cooperation between the two countries at the non-government levels. Some Iranian NGO officials recently visited the country.

Pakistan: Editorial Criticizes Iranian Minister's 'Alliance' Idea

BK0403090296 Islamabad NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu 3 Mar 96 p 6

[Editorial: "Iran's Asian Alliance Idea — Pakistan's Role and Responsibility"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati has said that one of the goals of Iranian foreign policy is to have Iran, India, and China form a united Asian bloc. Another idea is to have

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Russia, India, and Iran form a strong alliance. He said that sooner or later these countries have to become closer. The United States is targeting China and Muslim countries. The United States has adopted a strategy to maintain control over Asia, so it continues harassing these countries under one pretext or another. India's case in this reference is quite strange and interesting. India was a military ally of the Soviet Union for a long time, and even now does not heed U.S. advice or threats. The attitude of the United States regarding India's missile test and its plan to conduct nuclear explosions has been very soft and rather protecting. All of India's activities are happening under the patronage of the United States and its Western allies. The United States is allergic to Pakistan's nuclear program and wants to punish, not only Pakistan, but also China on the issue that it allegedly provided ring magnets to Pakistan.

Both China and Iran are concerned about countering U.S. pressure and getting away with its new world order. These concerns are not out of place as the United States, as it has with Pakistan, has included these countries among its enemies for no good reason. Iran, which was a protege of the United States under the Shah, is now being punished for its Islamic revolution. China is of concern to the United States as it is an emerging political, economic, and military power; forceful since the fall of the Soviet Union. It is deplorable that as a secret supporter of the United States, India should be included in this alliance. Pakistan's name has not been included, but sooner or later Iran and China will realize this oversight. An alliance with India is not in the interest of these countries.

Historically, neighboring China, which is a permanent member of the United Nations and is capable of becoming a regional super power, is India's biggest enemy in the region. The United States also hates China for the same reasons. The reason India hates Pakistan is that the creation of Pakistan was a setback to its idea of greater India. Pakistan does not pose a threat to India, while China is a natural adversary for India in every respect. Iran, despite professing Shi'ism, is an Islamic state and since its revolution has become the greatest "fundamentalist"; therefore it is not acceptable to fundamentalist Hindu India. Muslims are persecuted in India with no distinction between Shia and Sunni. In Kashmir, as houses of the Kashmiri Muslims are set on fire, bullets are fired upon Kashmiri Muslims, and Kashmiri women are dishonored, no consideration is given to this difference. If the Islamic Republic of Iran thinks that by aligning with India it will be able to counter U.S. pressure, or by including India in the Asian alliance the new world order will become a failure, it is a false hope and a misconception. India will definitely participate in the U.S. campaign against Iran's 'Fundamentalism.' It has never been faithful to any of its neighbors.

It is a strange idea floated by the Iranian foreign minister regarding the Asian alliance. We have expressed our reservations about India's inclusion in this alliance, but we want to see what China and Iran will do. Iran and China have been our trusted friends for over four decades and even now China has annoyed the United States with its friendship with Pakistan. We do not know what China thinks about this idea; does it agree with Iran or not? It does not know India well enough. Our policy of alliance with the United States, despite the discriminatory policies of the United States and our eagerness to accept the dictation of international financial organization controlled by the United States, has disappointed our neighbors and close friends. A natural alliance can be formed between Pakistan, China, and Iran if we act sensibly. As the U.S. ambassador advised: if U.S. friends are unacceptable then look for new friends. If so, then perhaps we should renew our friendship with our old friends.

Mr. Velayati may have wanted to include Pakistan in this alliance, but would have thought it impracticable in view of the nature of Pakistani-Indian relations and particularly India's attitude toward the Kashmir issue. He has admitted that Iran is ready to mediate on the Kashmir issue, but India remains evasive in this regard. Unless India gives up its hostile attitude towards Pakistan, settles the Kashmir dispute according to the resolutions of the UN, and agrees on solving the problems of South Asia on a priority basis, Pakistan will not join any alliance of which India is also a member. This would not only be difficult, but impossible. Who would know better than China and Iran that most of the problems faced by South Asia have been created by the obstinacy and stubbornness of the Indian leaders from Nehru to Narsimha Rao. Unless the Indian leadership is ready to adopt a sensible attitude, give up its aggressive designs and stop planning for the establishment of a greater India, any plan that the Iranian foreign minister proposes would be hard to form and work. Despite that, our foreign ministry should observe the situation closely and frame a policy that could end our isolation in the future.

Pakistan: British Defense Delegation, Mirani Discuss Various Issues

BK0503023996 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A defense delegation from Britain called on Defense Minister Aftab Shaban Mirani in Islamabad today and discussed various issues,

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including Kashmir. The British delegation was led by Permanent Under Secretary Mr. Richard (Martrum). The minister briefed the delegation about the massive human rights violations in Kashmir and urged Britain to persuade India to implement UN resolutions on Kashmir. Mr. Mirani expressed Pakistan's concern on the Indian missile program which has endangered the whole region. The minister said the two countries were already cooperating in combating terrorism and drug menace. He suggested that cooperation in defense production would also be beneficial for the two countries.

Pakistan: Sindh Chief Discusses Karachi With British Minister

BK0503024296 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Sindh Chief Minister Syed Abdullah Shah has said the government has been successful in dealing with terrorism with the cooperation of the people. Talking to Jeremy Hanley, a British minister for foreign and commonwealth affairs, in Karachi today, he said that cells comprising provincial ministers and advisers have been set up in all districts of Karachi, which hear people's grievances, including complaints about extrajudicial excesses. Syed Abdullah Shah said the government will hold local body elections soon after the restoration of peace and normalcy.

The British minister said the holding of the World Cup cricket matches in a peaceful atmosphere in Karachi is a positive step in the direction of the restoration of peaceful conditions in Karachi, which will definitely brighten the prospects for British investment.

Pakistan: Asif Ali Discusses Issues With UK's Jeremy Hanley

BK0503061496 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The British minister of state for foreign and Commonwealth affairs, Mr. Jeremy Hanley, had a meeting with Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali in Islamabad. They exchanged views on matters of common concern, including international and regional issues. The foreign minister briefed him on Pakistan's stand on the Kashmir issue as well as the massive violation of human rights by the Indian security forces in occupied Jammu and Kashmir. He also apprised the British minister of Pakistan's desire to maintain tension-free and good neighborly relations with all countries, including India. He said Pakistan adheres to the policy of noninterference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan and wants peace and tranquility in South Asia. Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali told the British minister about the situation in Karachi.

Mr. Hanley expressed his satisfaction over the normalcy he had seen during his stay in Karachi as well as on the ongoing dialogue for restoration of peace in the city. He briefed the foreign minister on the recently concluded Asia-Europe summit in Bangkok.

Pakistan: Nawaz Sharif, Visiting British Minister Discuss India

BK0503144396 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1400 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The British minister of state for foreign and Commonwealth affairs, Mr. Jeremy Hanley, has said his country would try all means to stop India from carrying out its second nuclear explosion. He said Britain would convey to India that such an act would neither serve its own interests, nor of the region. He expressed these views during his meeting with the leader of opposition, Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, in Islamabad today. The British high commissioner, Sir Christopher Macrae, and PML [Pakistan Muslim league] Secretary General Mr. Sartaj Aziz, were also present.

The British minister said his country will press both India and Pakistan to settle their disputes, including Kashmir, through negotiations. The opposition leader on the occasion insisted that war is no way to resolve Pakistan-India differences, including the dispute over Kashmir. He said a constructive approach and action based on the United Nations resolutions is needed.

Pakistan: Ministers Urge Altaf Group To Resume Negotiations

BK0403153296 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Interior Minister Nasirullah Khan Babar has said that if the Altaf Group workers lay down their arms and take part in political activities, the government will give them full protection. Talking to reporters in Karachi yesterday, he said only a handful of terrorists are indulging in the killings. The rest of the people are true Muslims and Pakistanis and have made tremendous sacrifices for the creation of Pakistan. He said peace and tranquility in Karachi has been restored after a long time for which the people of the area have made commendable efforts. Nasirullah Khan Babar said law enforcement agencies have every right to provide protection to innocent people against terrorists. If the Altaf Group is prepared to hold negotiations and face realities, the government will take one more step toward cooperating with them. He said cases filed against terrorists will be considered on merit. In response to a question, the interior minister said the government of Pakistan will dispatch the statements and video films

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of Altaf Hussain to the United Kingdom in connection with his extradition to Pakistan.

Professor N.D. Khan, Federal Minister for Law and Parliamentary Affairs, said peace has been restored in Karachi and now the Altaf Group should resume negotiations to stabilize the situation. Addressing a news conference in Karachi yesterday, he welcomed the meeting of Altaf Group representatives with President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari and said that the government wants to resume negotiations with them. The federal minister for law said with the normalization of situation in Karachi, there is now a need to call an all-party conference. He urged the journalist community to exert pressure on the Altaf Group team to resume negotiations.

Condemning the killing of a police constable by the Altaf Group in Karachi yesterday, Khalid Ahmad Khan Kharal, Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, said all political parties in the country should condemn such incidents. In a statement issued in Islamabad, he said the government is determined to maintain peace and order in Karachi and will deal effectively with terrorists.

Pakistan: Ministers Address Karachi Situation, Prospects of Talks

BK0503163196 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The negotiating teams of the government and Altaf Group on the Karachi issue are in touch with each other and there is a possibility of resuming talks by the end of this month. This was stated by Federal Law Minister Professor N.D. Khan at a news conference in Islamabad today. He said he had a telephone conversation with the Altaf Group negotiating team on 22 February, and that he met with Senator Ishtiaq Azhar yesterday. Both times he emphasized that the talks should be resumed. The Altaf Group team assured him that they would raise this matter with their leadership. The federal minister said he would again contact the Altaf Group team within next few days.

Interior Minister Major General Nasirullah Khan Babar said he was confident that the Karachi issue could be solved politically. Addressing a press conference in Karachi, he repeated the offer that those who lay down their arms and surrender to authorities will be dealt with leniently. Referring to the recent successes achieved by law enforcement agencies in recovering arms and ammunition, the federal minister said that terrorists are taking advantage of the government's offer and are laying down their arms voluntarily.

In response to a question, the interior minister said the Pakistan Government has supplied materials, including audio cassettes, to the British Government, which provides proof of the Altaf Group Chief's involvement in the terrorist activities in Karachi.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: Trade Delegation, Iranian Government Sign Agreements

BK0603112496 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bilateral discussions held recently between Sri Lanka and Iran, in Tehran, resulted in several economic and trade agreements. The minister of agriculture, land, and forestry, D.M. Jayaratne, and a trade delegation were in Tehran on the invitation of the Iranian Government. Sri Lanka will export gems, fruits, and spices to Iran. In return, Iran will supply urea fertilizer and petroleum to Sri Lanka. According to the agreements, these commodities will be supplied at the current market prices irrespective of fluctuations in the future. Iran also agreed to provide expertise to develop new technologies to boost the cultivation of paddy and fruits.

Sri Lanka: President Thanks Malaysia for Banning LTTE Activities

BK0403131996 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga and LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] leader Velupillai Prabhakaran have written to Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamed following Kuala Lumpur's decision to ban LTTE activities there, as the Sri Lankan authorities provided round the clock security to the Malaysian diplomats in Colombo.

President Kumaratunga sent a letter thanking Dr. Mahathir for his decision to ban all the LTTE activities in his country, including fund raising campaigns and demonstrations. Foreign Minister Lakshaman Kadirgamar sent a separate letter to his counterpart.

LTTE Leader Prabhakaran is also known to have sent a message to Dr. Mahathir condemning the decision of the Malaysian Government.

In Colombo, the government stepped up security around the Malaysian High Commission's residence and policemen in steel helmets were placed on (?static) duty from this week.

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Sri Lanka: LTTE Said Using Internet for Fundraising, Extortion

BK0203111896 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 2 Mar 96

[Unattributed report — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, Friday (Lankapuvath) — The LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] is blatantly exploiting the Internet information network for several illegal fund-raising rackets and for issuing extortion death threats.

Official sources told Lankapuvath that the international deception used by the Tigers to fund brutal terrorism in Sri Lanka has been exposed by the fact that in one instance, it solicits funds by appealing to international donor communities to adopt a child and channel funds to LTTE offices abroad, which in actual fact are being used to purchase weapons, while on the other hand, in a publicity statement the LTTE has sent out an urgent appeal for money to purchase missiles and asked the international community to contribute generously, nakedly exposing its intention to set up a separate state of Eelam in Sri Lanka, and to heighten its campaign of terror.

The terrorist organisation is also using the Internet to issue death threats on thousands of expatriate Tamils worldwide, if they do not contribute to the LTTE coffers.

The problem is so acute in Canada that the authorities are now clamping down on LTTE activities in that country where one organisation, the Tamil Eelam society of Canada has boasted that it is extorting funds from Sri Lankan asylum seekers amounting to four million US dollars a month, to be remitted to the LTTE in support of its campaign of carnage and terror.

Sri Lanka: Eight 'Hardcore' Tigers Arrested in Colombo

BK0203124896 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 2 Mar 96

[Report by Paneetha Ameresekere — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Police have arrested eight hardcore Tigers in Colombo, five of them women, following information provided by a key tiger, who had surrendered to the security forces after being disenchanted with the movement. It was on information provided by this Tiger, that assistant labour commissioner Ramalingam Dharmalingam was recently arrested from a temple premises in Colombo.

The Tiger informant had revealed vital information concerning the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam]. The Tiger concerned, had also informed police that two former women JVPers [Jathika Vimukthi Peramuna — mainstream Tamil group] are also involved with the LTTE.

One woman Tiger, detained by the police, is an employee of a government institution. Another lived at a leading Colombo Hotel for the past four years, on a monthly rental of Rs [rupees] 6000.

The third woman is the bodyguard of Colombo's Woman black Tiger leader, while the fourth is believed to have been gathering information regarding Colombo's TELO [Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization] office, while employed as a domestic in Bambalapitiya. She had befriended the police officers guarding that office. The fifth also belonged to the Tigers intelligence wing.

Of the three men arrested, one was a communications expert, in charge of the communication sets operating in several Tiger camps. He and a colleague of his, were netted, in this swoop.

The third man, was an estate Tamil, attached to the Black Tiger suicide squad. He was taken into custody in Bambalapitiya.

"Scores of LTTE cadre operating in Colombo, are from the up country areas", the police informant has said.

This informant, whose confessions led to these vital breakthroughs in police investigations in Colombo this week, was a key player in a number of field operations conducted by the Tigers, and had also been tailing the late Presidential candidate Gamini Dissanayake, in the meetings he addressed.

Disillusioned with the movement, this Tiger had first surrendered to a small army detachment.

On information of this "deserter's" whereabouts, the LTTE had attacked and destroyed this camp, and captured this person. In an act of revenge, for deserting the movement, the LTTE had murdered this cadre's father.

This Tiger, who again escaped, made sure of surrendering to a bigger and secure army camp this time. The information provided, has resulted in the detention of a number of key LTTE operatives in Colombo, police said.

These arrests were made by the Kirillapone, Narahenpita, Bambalapitiya, Wellawatte, Kollupitiya and Keselwatte Police, under the supervision of ASP [Assistant Superintendent of Police] Colombo South, Angammanna Tennekone.

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Sri Lanka: Troops Attack 'Major Tiger Camp,' Seize Supplies

BK0503031196 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 5 Mar 96

[Unattributed report — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Advancing troops on an operation code named 'Rivikirana' [Sun Rays] smashed a major Tiger camp name 'Ramesh' in the Taravikulam jungle in eastern Batticaloa on Sunday, forcing around 100 Tigers to flee.

Troops also seized 20 bags each of rice, dhal and sugar, a generator, a TV set, two video decks, a roneo [duplicating] machine, LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] propaganda material, two typewriters, a table fan and five lorry batteries, a military officer said.

Official reports said that the Camp leader "Ramesh" was earlier killed by the Security forces during a confrontation in Kalkudah.

Meanwhile two LTTE suspects are reported to have escaped from the custody of the military police in Trincomalee on Sunday May 3. While the relatives of the suspects were permitted to visit them at the camp. A search operation is on to apprehend them.

Sri Lanka: Police Discover Explosives Cache in Colombo

BK0503122096 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The police assisted by the public have detected a cache of explosives at Farm Road in Mutwal, Colombo. Among the items recovered from a drain were several time bombs, four hand grenades, and seven remote-controlled detonators. The explosives concealed in a bag had been found dumped in a drain opposite a Roman Catholic mission in Mutwal. In a statement, the chief inspector of Mutwal police said that he had received a call to the effect that a suspicious-looking parcel had been detected by an individual. Immediately, he dispatched a mobile patrol to the area. The explosives were defused by the Army bomb [squad] and the inspector added that a cordon and search operation was followed following the discovery of the explosives and since [as heard] suspects had been taken into custody for questioning. The Army bomb squad defused the explosives. The inspector said that statements of a number of persons, including a couple of clergymen in the mission, have been recorded.

Sri Lanka: Navy Recovers Gelignite, Equipment From Tiger Craft

BK0603053496 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 6 Mar 96

[Unattributed report — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nearly 30 sticks of gelignite, motor cycle, and torch batteries and other items used in the manufacture of anti-personnel mines and landmines were recovered by the Navy in an attack on a tiger boat at Gangi, the Mahaveli estuary in Trincomalee last night.

According to security sources, a patrol craft of the Sri Lanka Navy, which has stepped up its vigilance in the seas off the north eastern Trincomalee coast during the past few months, on Tuesday night had spotted the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] boat slowly putting out to sea from the Mahaveli estuary. Upon being challenged, the occupants of the boat had jumped overboard, forcing the sailors to open fire.

While the tigers manning the boat are believed to have been killed, the sailors had managed to recover the items being carried in the boat before it sank from water gushing in from the holes caused by the gunfire. About 25-30 sticks of gelignite, battery acid, motorcycle and torch batteries, camouflaged uniforms, soap and camphor were among the items recovered from the boat, sources said.

Sri Lanka: Police Repel LTTE Attack in North

BK0603053696 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 6 Mar 96

[Report by W.G. Gunaratne — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Anuradhapura — Weli Oya Police repulsed an LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] attack in the Ethawetunawewa area yesterday morning after an encounter which lasted for about an hour.

SP [Superintendent of Police] Ranjith de Silva said the Tigers attacked with mortars and some shrapnel fell on the Weli Oya Police station. LTTE casualties are not known.

The SP said he believed seven or eight Tigers on a spying mission would have opened fire at the village mistakenly.

Meanwhile an operational Headquarters release said troops killed a Tiger during a confrontation at Valachchenai in the Batticaloa district on Monday. A Tiger radio monitored indicated that ten Tigers were

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also wounded. Troops recovered a LTTE body, a pouch and other items.

Another report said that two civilians were wounded due to a tiger bomb explosion in Muttur, Trincomalee. The wounded were admitted to the Muttur hospital.

Sri Lanka: Police Search for 11 Tamil Suicide Bombers in Colombo

BK0603113596 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Police have launched a cordon and search operation for suspected Tamil suicide bombers in Colombo. The operation follows the discovery of a 20-kg parcel bomb together with seven detonators and four hand grenades. The search operation was launched in Colombo's commercial area of Mattakulia where the bomb was found, packed in a clothed bag and left in a drain. The police have already arrested two men. A spokesman declined to give details, but added that statements have been recorded from several people in the area. The haul was found as the authorities issued an alert for 11 suspected Tiger suicide bombers believed to have infiltrated the Colombo city. The Defense Ministry issued the photographs of five women and a man described as suicide bombers of the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam]. The descriptions of five others believed to have arrived in Colombo from Jaffna on bombing mission were also issued. The suicide team is believed to be headed by a 28-year old woman identified as Devi Akka. The other five women in the squad were between the ages of 21 and 23.

Meanwhile, in the island's northwestern region Mannar region, security forces destroyed a key political office of the LTTE killing at least three LTTE terrorists. Three soldiers were also wounded in the overnight battle.

Sri Lanka: LTTE Said To Appeal for Cease-Fire Indirectly

BK0603052596 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 6 Mar 96

[LANKAPUVATH report — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, Tuesday [5 March] — With the growing groundswell of support both nationally and internationally, including the Tamil community, for the People's Alliance government's devolution proposals and its being military weak, the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] finding itself becoming increasingly isolated has used one of its front organisations to appeal to Sri Lankan President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga for a ceasefire and the resumption of peace talks. However, the LTTE has not stated it is willing to meet the government's basic preconditions to resume negotiations which are the laying down of arms and a definite time frame for the negotiations and the ending of the North-East conflict.

Official sources told Lankapuvath that the LTTE political headquarters in the Wanni had read out over its Radio during the week end the contents of a letter addressed to President Kumaratunga, purported to be from the chairman and secretary of the Tamil Eelam Literary Front, appealing to the President to declare a ceasefire and to resume negotiations with the LTTE which they claim is the main representative of the Tamil people, with a view to finding a solution to the ethnic problem.

The chairman of the Tamil Eelam Literary Society I. Murugiah and its secretary, K. Thanikasalam end their letter to President Kumaratunga by repeating their appeal to her for a ceasefire in order to find a political solution through negotiations.

The LTTE reneged on a cessation of hostilities agreement with the Sri Lankan government on April 19 last year and embarked on a series of vicious attacks both on the military and civilians, forcing the government to retaliate strongly and re-take the LTTE's stronghold of Jaffna City where it was running an illegal administration.

During this period the government lifted the embargo on a large number of goods.

The Sri Lankan government however continues to provide food and essential goods to all those living in northern Sri Lanka including LTTE controlled areas.

Sri Lanka: LTTE Denies Threats to Japanese, Malaysian Missions

BK0203144696 (Internet) Tamil Eelam News WWW in Tamil 27 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Two Tamil civilians were killed in the dastardly missile attacks carried out by the Sri Lankan troops from the Kinnaiyadi military camp in Batticaloa. The two civilians — 55 year old T. Seethai and 48-year old K. Manickam — fell victims to the frenzy of the government terrorists. Their bodies, kept in Valaichchenai Hospital, were claimed by their relatives and taken home. Meanwhile, people from surrounding villages have been emigrating to safer places, dreading this kind of terrorism being practiced by the Sri Lankan Government. Because of this, Kinniya village and the ones surrounding it wear a deserted look. About 594 families been moved from these villages.

The popular Pillaiyar temple located in the heart of the village has been destroyed in the continuous missile attacks against the densely populated localities.

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A fisherman was seriously injured when the Navy attacked fishermen engaged in fishing activities in the sea off the coast of Arialai. Others managed to escape without any injuries. The injured fisherman was admitted to Point Pedro hospital. This incident took place on 25 February last.

Civilian houses in Tondamanaru and Gerudavil localities have been damaged in the missile attacks being carried out by Sri Lankan troops from Palali military base. A 37-year old housewife called Thanabalasingham Yogeswari was seriously injured in yesterday's missile attack. She has been admitted to Mandigai [place name as transliterated] primary health center.

Kandy dance troupes and drama troupes from the South have been sent to the north to entertain the Sri Lankan troops, who are have occupied Weligama by force. Cultural programs for these troupes have been performed in the military camps located in Jaffna, Madagal, and Ilavalai. Scenes depicting enthusiastic dance and music sequences performed by artistes and Sinhalese troops together have been recorded and telecast over Sri Lanka's Rupavahini television. A newspaper from Jaffna has questioned the logic behind performing Kandy dance in Weligama after chasing the Tamils from their native places. The above paper has pointed out that the troops occupying deserted Tamil localities have no vacation; they are unable to go to their houses and meet relatives; they nurture a constant fear of death and remain dejected; and that it is a smart move adopted by the government to make the troops forget their worries through cultural programs.

The international secretariat of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [LTTE] has issued a statement today, rejecting the news item that appeared in the Colombo SUNDAY TIMES a few days ago. The aforementioned Colombo paper had published a story that the Ellalan Force, which is considered to be an integral part of the LTTE, had issued death threats to the ambassadors of Japan and Malaysia based in Colombo. In its statement, the LTTE strongly rejected this report and denied that it has any links with the Ellalan Force. The statement made it clear that the LTTE had not issued any threats to any ambassador based in Colombo and that the LTTE would not issue any such threats in the future either. Meanwhile, through a statement, the Malaysian high commissioner in Colombo has rejected the Colombo press report that stated that the LTTE's Ellalan Force had threatened the Malaysian high commission with an attack on the mission. Stating that he did not get any such threats, the high commissioner said he was surprised over the press report, did not know how that paper got such a report, and that he would enquire about it.

The thirst of the Tigers is the motherland of Tamil Eelam.

Sri Lanka: LTTE Dispatch—Tigers Control Most of East

BK0503080696 (Internet) Tamil Eelam News WWW in Tamil 29 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] As a result of the continuous attacks being carried out by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [LTTE] in the east, the movements of Sri Lankan troops on land have largely been restricted. The troops have been confined to their barracks at several localities. Street patrols have also largely been restricted. Most eastern parts have been brought under the control of the LTTE. A correspondent from Colombo reports that the movement of troops can be seen at certain localities only during the daytime and those localities come under LTTE's control at night. The above correspondent states that the situation that prevailed in the north around 1985 can be seen in the east today. At that time, the LTTE, step-by-step, forced the troops in the north to remain in their barracks and thus brought a most of the area under its control.

Two LTTE cadres embraced martyrdom in a direct confrontation with the troops at Talavai in Batticaloa District. The freedom fighters who embraced martyrdom were: Major Kalaneyan alias Kanthaiah Ravinathan from Batticaloa and Lieutenant Adhikarakan alias Chellathurai Natarasayokan from the same district. Our tributes go to those national heroes who sacrificed their lives for the sake of the liberation of our motherland.

The Sri Lankan troops continued their missile attacks in the Vadamarachchi and Thenmarachchi areas yesterday as well. Missile attacks were carried out on the locality of Nakarkoyil in East Vadamarachchi and the localities of Eluthumadduval and Palai in Themarachchi at 0450 early in the morning yesterday. As the missiles fired from Palali and Elephant Pass camps mostly landed on the plains and blew up, there were no damages.

The Sri Lankan troops who went to the lodges belonging to the Tamils within Tangalla police station limits warned the proprietors not to accommodate any Tamils there. The lodge owners were also warned of dire consequences if Tamils were given accommodation in violation of their directives. The Sri Lankan troops, who visited the lodges and shops belonging to the Tamils in the area of Kadiragama last Saturday, issued the above directive with a threat.

Two young Tamil women staying in a lodge in Trincomalee are missing. It is feared that, most probably, they were killed. On the basis of the evidence collected from

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the lodge, it is understood that they would have been killed. Bloodstained clothes, watches, and the articles used by them have been recovered from a (?cupboard) of the bathroom. There are no further details on the incident.

An outrageous incident took place a few days ago when a young family that arrived in Colombo was arrested and locked up in prison by Sri Lankan troops. A young man, his wife, and their 30-month old daughter were arrested by the Sinhalese troops and put in Mahara prison. The Sri Lankan troops arrested a civilian called Yogarasa, his wife Saraswathi, and their daughter, who went to Colombo on some business, on the same day of their arrival [remainder of passage missing]

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